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GILDS.

—

WALFORD.







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GILDS:

THEIR

ORIGIN, CONSTITUTION, OBJECTS,
AND LATER HISTORY.

BY THE LATE

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BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

[*NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION.*]

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P R E F A C E.

AFTER my husband's death, in going through the mass of incomplete material gathered together for the various works on which he was engaged, I found that the MSS. relating to "History of Gilds" (then being published monthly in *THE ANTIQUARIAN Magazine*) was in a very forward state; and I consulted Miss Toulmin Smith, with a view to obtaining her valuable assistance towards the completion of the work. I was, however, reluctantly obliged to abandon this idea, in order to complete, if possible, two still more important works—viz., the "Insurance Cyclopædia" and the "History of Periodical Literature," on which the author had spent a vast amount of labour and research, extending over (I think) the last twenty years of his life. Eventually I decided, with the help of my husband's cousin, Mr. Edward Walford, in whose Magazine, as before stated, the enlarged reprint of "Gilds" was being published, to finish the work from the material which I had in hand, with as little alteration or addition as possible. This has now been done, and these few words of explanation must be my apology for the somewhat abrupt conclusion of the work. The last Chapter written entirely by my husband contained the completion of the Gilds of Somerset—Chapter XLII.

I should like also to state here that there still remains in my hands much interesting matter relating to foreign and religious "Gilds," which my husband intended for a separate work; and as he had not commenced to lay down his own views, but had only collected the raw material, I have not thought it well to introduce any of it into the present work, though I may seek an opportunity in the future to publish it.

L. H. J. W.

*Charltons, Seal, near Sevenoaks,
February, 1888.*





THE HISTORY OF GILDS.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

7. **G**ILDS (frequently but erroneously spelled Guilds) have played an important part in the history of our civilisation, and probably in that of the world generally. They have fostered our arts and sciences, developed and extended our commerce, and in many cases cherished and preserved our liberties. Further, they have in various respects moulded our national character and institutions. But further, they have nurtured that principle of association for the common protection in wealth and in adversity, which, while it is claimed as a peculiarity of the Anglo-Saxon race, has, in truth, a far more remote antiquity. It is to be traced through the Oriental races, back to the ancient Hindoos; and in fact seems coeval with commerce and civilisation. It may be that the Anglo-Saxon race has elevated this principle to a higher standpoint than any before them. The Gilds were in truth the Provident Associations of the Middle Ages, and probably the only ones which were required or could have existed in that state of society.

Definition.—It may be useful at starting to speak of the definition of the term. Bishop Gillies, in his Treatise, published in Edinburgh

in 1843, says (Appendix, p. iii.): "As to the word Gild, it is one of Saxon origin, and is derived from *Geldan* or *Gildan*, which means 'to pay': because the members of societies so called, whether united together for civil or religious purposes, were '*Gildare*,' that is to pay something towards the support of the brotherhood to which they belonged. This will also account for a preference being here given to what seems to have been the more ancient way of writing the word *Gild*, over the more recent one of *Guild*, as in Guildhall, or Dean of Guild.

Dr. Lujo Brentano (Essay on the History and Development of Gilds, 1870) however, says: "It is a mistake to connect the word with the German *geld*, payment. The real derivation is to be found in Welsh *gwyl*, Breton, *goel*, *gouil*, a feast or holiday." He also, in support, quotes the Dutch word *gulde*, a feast; also a gild or corporation.

I am disposed to think that the word has had a more simple significance, viz. a body of men associated together, under oath, for a common purpose.

Origin. — The principle of association, as already intimated, began in a very early period of the history of mankind. It may be traced to the Essenians, who were a religious sect of the Jews, but were organised in communistic societies, the individual members of which were provided with all the necessities of life. The arrangements made in the synagogues of the Israelites in Alexandria (160-143 B.C.), where the Jews were distributed by trades, show that societies similar to trade-gilds were in existence at that time among the old Jewish nation (Graetz's Hist. of the Jews, vol. iii. p. 34). In Athens, the Solonic Law recommended the organisation of trade-societies as promoting the benefit of the whole community; and in Sparta, the membership in these societies seem to have been hereditary. In Rome, such societies must have been of a very early date. It is said that Numa Pompilius, King of the Romans (from 714 to 652 B.C.) united the musicians, carpenters, coppersmiths, dyers, jewellers, shoemakers, potters, and tanners into societies; and under the Cæsars the shipmasters transporting grain from the provinces to the capital, and the bakers with whom the Government contracted for the distribution of bread among the populace,

organised influential societies vested with powerful privileges.* It is true that the information we have about these old societies of the Jews, Greeks, and Romans is very meagre, and of an inferential character; but there is no good reason to doubt that they had essentially in view the same objects which gave birth and life to the trade-gilds of the Middle Ages, the successors to the old gilds.

There are authors of high authority who trace the origin of these old Teutonic societies to the *collegia opificum* of the Romans, which were no mere formalities, and were linked together by moral and religious bonds. They had their own *sacra*, which constituted the real and deep-seated connective link which is analogous (*mutatis mutandis*) to the saints of the Christian gilds. If there is lack of documentary evidence, the presumption is sufficiently admissible that the gilds were not the first representatives of the idea of association, and that the question "how to help the few by the co-operation of the many?" was a problem not unknown to the civilised nations of the classic period of history.

Dr. E. W. Wilda, in his "*Das Gildenwesen in Mittelalter Eine gekrönte Preisschrift*" (Halle, 1831, c. i. s. 1), expresses the opinion that the origin of Gilds is to be traced in, and was in fact derived from, the sacrificial feasts of the ancient Teutonic nations. And Lappenberg (History of England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings [Thorpe's translation], vol. ii. p. 350) and Thorpe (*Diplomatarium Anglicum*, preface, p. xvi.) incline to the same view. But Mr. Toulmin Smith was emphatic "that none of our Gilds were ever founded on such a basis" (Gilds, preface, p. xvi. note). So, again, he contended that there was no analogy between the old Sabine Curies and our English Gilds.

Dr. Lujo Brentano claims that England is the birthplace of Gilds, properly so called, and proceeds to account for their origin as follows: "The family appears as the first Gild, or at least as an archetype of the Gilds. Originally, its providing care satisfies all existing wants; and for other societies there is therefore no room. As soon, however, as wants arise which the family can no longer

* In the procession of the Carnival in this "eternal city," many of these societies are still represented.

satisfy—whether on account of their peculiar nature, or in consequence of their increase, or because its own activity grows feeble—closer artificial alliances immediately spring forth to provide for them, in so far as the State does not do it. Infinitely varied as are the wants which call them forth, so are naturally the objects of these alliances. Yet the basis on which they all rest is the same; all are unions between man and man, not mere associations of capital like our modern societies and companies. The cement which holds their members together is the feeling of solidarity, the esteem for each other as men, the honour and virtue of the associates, and the faith in them—not an arithmetical rule of probabilities, indifferent to all good and bad personal qualities. The support which the community affords a member is adjusted according to his wants—not according to his money-stake, or to a jealous debtor and creditor account; and in like manner the contributions of the members vary according to the wants of the society, and it therefore never incurs the danger of bankruptcy, for it possesses an inexhaustible reserve fund in the infinitely elastic productive powers of its members. In short, whatever and however diverse may be their aims, the Gilds take over from the family the spirit which held it together and guided it; they are its faithful image, though only for special and definite objects.

The first societies formed on these principles were the sacrificial unions, from which, later on, the religious Gilds were developed for association in prayer and good works. Then, as soon as the family could no longer satisfy the need for legal protection, unions of artificial-family members were formed for this purpose, as the State was not able to afford the needful help in this respect [Frith-Gilds]. These Gilds, however, had their origin in direct imitation of the family. Most certainly, none were developed from an earlier religious union; as little as were the Roman *collegia opificum* from the Roman sacrificial societies, or the Craft-Gilds from the Gild-Merchants, or any trade-unions from a Craft-Gild.

Mr. Toulmin Smith, in his "Traditions of the Old Crown House" (Birmingham, 1863, p. 28), speaks authoritatively on the antiquity of English Gilds thus: "English Gilds, as a system of wide-

spread practical institutions, are older than any kings of England. They are told of in the books that contain the oldest relics of English laws. The old laws of King Alfred, of King Ina, of King Athelstan, of King Henry I., reproduce still older laws in which the universal existence of Gilds is treated as a matter of well-known fact, and in which it is taken to be a matter of course that every one belonged to some Gild. As population increased, Gilds multiplied; and thus, while the beginnings of the other Gilds are lost in the far dimness of time, and remain quite unknown, the beginnings of the later ones took place in methods and with accompanying forms that have been recorded."



CHAPTER II.

OBJECTS.

S HARON TURNER, in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," says of Gilds: "They seem on the whole to have been Friendly Associations, made for mutual aid and contribution to meet the pecuniary exigencies which were perpetually arising from burials, legal exactions, penal mulcts, and other payments and compensations."

But in the introduction to the late Mr. Toulmin Smith's "English Gilds" (Early English Text Society, 1870) a wider definition is given: "The early English Gild was an institution of local self-help, which, before Poor-laws were invented, took the place, in old times, of the modern Friendly or Benefit Society, but with a higher aim; while it joined all classes together in a care for the needy, and for objects of common welfare, it did not neglect the forms and the practice of Religion, Justice, and Morality."

Dr. Lingard, in his "Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church," says: "Gilds were institutions of great antiquity among the Anglo-Saxons; and in every populous district they existed in numerous ramifications. They were of different descriptions. Some were restricted to the performance of religious duties; of others the

professed object was the prosecution of thieves, and the preservation of property ; but all were equally solicitous to provide for the spiritual welfare of the departed brethren."

Nearly all Gilds, for whatever purpose founded, had then certain features in common. Though one Gild may have set itself one special object, and another a different one, yet, running throughout the whole, there are to be found the same general characteristics of brotherly aid and social charity ; and the accompanying arrangements necessary to carry these out were things common to all, and therefore well understood as matters of course. If, therefore, we do not find recorded of every one that it kept a feast, or held a "morn-speech," or had a Gild-house, &c., it must be taken to be because each of these was so usual a part of a Gild existence that it was not necessary to mention the fact.

A general understanding of the diversified objects of Gilds may be obtained by a detailed review of their recorded regulations. Care for the fitting burial of the "brethren and sistren," at the cost of the Gild, was an object of the first and most general solicitude. Help to the poor, the sick, the infirm and aged, either by money, food, or clothing, was almost equally general. Assistance to those who were overtaken by misfortune, as fire, flood, robbery, was a common provision. Loans of money from the common Gild-stock were made in some Gilds under special circumstances only ; in others as a part of their ordinary working, while in others free loans or gifts to the young, in view of enabling them to get placed in the world, was an especial feature. In Ludlow, Herefordshire, "any good Girl of the Gild" had an unconditional dowry provided on her marriage, if her father were too poor to provide her with one. Brethren cast into prison were to be visited, and aided in getting their release. Others going pilgrimages, whether to the Holy Land, to Rome, or to "St. James of Compostella," were helped and honoured. One Gild sent a pilgrim to Canterbury every year. Sometimes the brethren were to be visited by, and other times entertained at the houses of, their richer brethren. The Gild-merchant of Coventry kept a "lodging house with thirteen beds, to lodge poor folks coming through the land on pilgrimage, or any other work of

charity" ; with a governor of the house, and a woman to wash the pilgrim's feet.

A more detailed examination has enabled me to compile the following specific enumeration of the wide range of their provident and useful objects :

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Relief in Poverty. | 15. Aid to obtain work. |
| 2. „ Sickness. | 16. Relief in Defending himself at Law. |
| 3. „ Old age. | 17. Relief in being Deaf or Dumb. |
| 4. „ on Loss of Sight. | 18. Relief in being afflicted with Leprosy. |
| 5. „ „ of Limb. | 19. Dowries on Marriages of Females, or on their entering a House of Religion. |
| 6. „ „ of Cattle. | 20. Repair of Roads and Bridges. |
| 7. „ on Fall of a House. | 21. Repair of Churches. |
| 8. „ on Making Pilgrimages. | |
| 9. „ in case of Loss by Fire. | |
| 10. „ „ Floods. | |
| 11. „ „ Robbery. | |
| 12. „ „ Shipwreck. | |
| 13. „ „ Imprisonment. | |
| 14. Aid in temporary pecuniary difficulties. | |

Finally—again quoting Dr. Brentano's exhaustive Essay—the Gild, “which, as we have shown, stood like a loving mother, providing and assisting, at the side of her sons in every circumstance of life, cared for her children even after death ; and the ordinances as to this last act breathe the same spirit of equality among her sons, on which all her regulations were founded, and which constituted her strength. In cases of insolvency at death, the funerals of poor members were to be equally respected with those of the rich” (p. cxxxiii.).

But the good work of the Gilds was not alone confined to their members. It was not unfrequent for a number of the poor to be fed on the feast-day at the Gild-hall. Thus in two of the Lincoln Gilds it was ordered that as many poor as there were brothers and sisters (of the Gild) were to be fed on bread, ale, and fish ; and in the Gild of Gertonburdych, Norfolk, provision was made for the

distribution of a certain amount of corn [wheat] and barley yearly. A Gild in York found beds and attendance for poor strangers. The Gild of the Holy Cross in Birmingham had almshouses for the poor people of the town; and help to the poor of the district was one of the "workis of charity" for which the Gild in the same place called "Lenche's Trust" was founded.

Turning next to works of public usefulness, we find that two of the Birmingham Gilds charged themselves with the repair of certain highways. The Gild of Hatfield Brodoke, Essex, also, contributed to the repair of the roads; while the Gild of St. Nicholas, Worcester, repaired the walls and bridge of that city. Many Gilds made important contributions to the repair of churches, of which that of Pampisford, Cambridgeshire, is a curious example: some bushels of barley were given "to put out to increase for the use and repair of the church in the said town, which is in poor condition and partly decayed; and as of necessity in a short time the top of this, called the roof, must be made anew, and it cannot be done without the aid of the Gild, they pray for God that their goods be not disturbed." The Gild of Swaffham, in Norfolk, undertook the "repair of the church, and the renovation of vestments, books, and other ornaments in the said church." The Gild of St. Andrew, Cavenham, Suffolk, would bear the charge of repair and sustentation of the church, when necessary, "*ex consensu fratrum et sororum.*" Many others might be named. And among the good works which the elastic constitution of the Gilds rendered it natural and fitting for them to take up, was the maintenance of a free school and school-master, as was also done by the Gild of St. Nicholas in Worcester, the Gild of Palmers in Ludlow, and the famous Gild of Kalenders in Bristol.

I shall next proceed to review the various classes of Gilds which have existed in the past or are now existing.



CHAPTER III.

FRITH-GILDS.

THESE were an intermediary kind of Gild, being composed first of several neighbouring families, and afterwards, probably of all the members of a given community. When the community became enlarged into a town, it sometimes took the shape of a Town or Corporate Gild ; or, failing this, the members merged into the larger and more general Religious or Social Gilds. The clans of Scotland and of Ireland probably originated in the manner of Frith-Gilds, but never passed into more highly developed associations.

Similar regulations to those which prevailed in the Religious Gilds with regard to helping Gild-brothers in every need, were to be found in the Frith-Gilds. On this point, indeed, the statutes of the Gilds of all countries are almost identical. If a brother falls into poverty, if he incurs losses by fire or shipwreck, if illness or mutilation renders him unable to work, the brothers contribute to his assistance. If a brother finds another in danger of life on sea, or in captivity, he is bound to rescue him, even at the sacrifice of a part of his own goods ; for which, however, he receives compensation from the brother assisted, or from the community. English Gild-statutes frequently mention loans to be given to brothers carrying on trade, often with no other condition than the repayment of it when they should no longer need it. The sick brother found in his Gild aid and attendance ; the dead was buried ; for his soul prayers were offered, and services performed ; and not unfrequently the Gild gave a dowry to his poor orphan daughter. The numerous provisions as to the poor, as to pilgrims, and other helpless people, in the statutes of English Gilds, prove that non-members in want found help from them as well.

The regulations as to the payment of chaplains of the Gild, as to common service and prayers, as well as to common feastings, were equally general : and everywhere fines recur equally for the infringement of the Ordinances agreed to, for unseemly behaviour, and for offending of members.

There was an alderman at the head of the Gild, and often stewards by his side as assistants. Other officials are also now and then to be met with. The reception of a member depended upon the whole association. If anyone living in the country, or a foreigner, wished to become a member of the Gild, a citizen had to pledge himself for his honour. In an association so closely united, the honour of every single member was to a certain extent the honour of the whole body. Pure life and spotless reputation must therefore appear as the condition of Gild freedom. Besides this, the Gild-statutes demand no other condition for admission. Everybody entering the Gild had to bind himself by oath to keep the Gild-statutes.

Women might also become members of the Gild. They were, however, generally the wives or daughters of Gild-brothers. It is only an exception when, in several of the Gilds, women became free of the Gilds in their own right. They, however, shared only in the advantages and burdens of the Gild, and never took part in its administration or its councils. I shall give further details on this subject hereafter.

It is clear that several of the conditions here stated could only arise when these Frith-Gilds had passed into a stage of higher development than we here assign to them in a general classification of Gilds; they in fact become metamorphosed into Town or Corporate Gilds.

The most detail-giving Statutes of the Frith-Gilds which any country can show are believed to be the Danish. The following provisions are drawn mainly from their Ordinances: "If a Gild-brother has been slain by a stranger, the Gild appears as an ally of his relations for taking revenge, or for obtaining the *wergild* or blood-money. But if a Gild-brother has slain a stranger, the Gild assists him in the atonement he must make for the manslaughter, by means of the *wergild*; or in his escape, if he has been outlawed for the crime. Even if one Gild-brother kills another, the case is chiefly considered as a matter for the family of the slain; and, having made atonement for it, the culprit may remain a member of the fraternity. Only in the case of malicious and wilful murder was he expelled as a worth-

less man (*niding*), and left to the mercy (that is, vengeance) of his victim's family. The Gild-brothers also rendered each other such assistance as was sanctioned by the laws and customs of the time, in prosecuting and supporting their rights in Courts of Law. But it was everywhere the first principle of the Gild to assist him only who had justice on his side. How strictly this principle was observed may be inferred from the universal esteem enjoyed by the Gild-brothers : so that their evidence was considered specially creditable ; and whenever twelve persons were required as jurors or compurgators, half the number of Gild-brothers, or even less, were deemed sufficient.

The final stage of the *Frith-Gilds* will be traced under *Town and Corporation Gilds* ; while some general remarks upon them will be found in our chronological summary under date 1272—1307 : see Chapter II.



CHAPTER IV.

RELIGIOUS GILDS.

RELIGIOUS GILDS were among the earliest of the great order of Gilds. Quite apart from their existence in other countries, they are known to have a very remote antiquity in our island. Throughout the Middle Ages they existed in great numbers in every country in Europe where the Roman Catholic religion held sway. They monopolised an important place in those works of religion and charity so intimately associated with the Romish Church. Gallienus counted about 80 in Cologne, Melle about 70 in Lübeck, and Staphorst more than 100 in Hamburg. In our own country there was a large number in York and in London ; in Norwich there were 12, in Lynn as many, and probably as many or more in every cathedral city in the land.

The especial object of these Gilds was to unite in every exercise of religion ; but before all things the association for the veneration of certain religious mysteries, and in honour of saints. Accordingly

these Gilds were everywhere placed under the patronage of the Holy Trinity, or of certain Saints, or of the Holy Cross, or of the Holy Sacrament, or some other religious mystery. Their objects and organisations were so identical everywhere, and remained so essentially unchanged during successive centuries, that a comparison of them in various countries and at various times could only lead to repetitions. (Brentano, p. 83.)

In honour of the patron saints and others, altars were illuminated, and prayers were said; and minor Gilds were founded with the sole object of securing the performance of these rites in perpetuity.

The Festivals of the Gilds of this class were usually held on the day of the patron saint of the Gild. A chief feature of it—beyond the procession and the attendance at church, and perhaps a feast at some period of the day—was the performance of a Scriptural Piece, or a Miracle Play. This was especially so with the Gild of the Lord's Prayer, at York (of which details will be given in Part iii. under *York*, 1388); also with the Gilds of St. Helen, of St. Mary, and of Corpus Christi, at Beverley. In 1409 the Gild of Parish, Clerks of London performed the play of the "Creation of the World" before a numerous assembly of the nobility, at Skinner's well, near Clerkenwell, after which the spectators adjourned to Smithfield to be present at a tournament between the marshal and gentlemen of Hainault, and the Earl of Somerset and a like number of Englishmen. (Wade's Brit. Hist.)* The Passion Play of Ober-Ammergau (Southern Bavaria), played now every tenth year only, and another in Spain (played with "painful realism" in 1873), are Continental

* It was these miracle plays which, in process of time, developed into theatrical performances, as now understood. Northouck (*New Hist. of London*, 1773), writing of the close of the sixteenth century, 1574, says: "The exhibition of stage plays and interludes, which used to be occasionally practised by ingenious tradesmen and gentlemen's servants, has now become a regular profession, and being commonly acted on Sundays and festivals, the playhouses—which were large rooms in inns—were thronged, while the churches were neglected. *The Plague being looked upon as a judgment for the dissoluteness thus occasioned*, the Common Council imposed penalties on the acting any plays containing immodest or seditious matter, and ordered that none should be acted without being perused and allowed by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, who were also to license the

manifestations of the same. Some of the Gilds were devoted to the performance of secular plays: for instance, the Gild at Stamford, and that of the *Confrérie des Conards* at Rouen. Probably, however, this latter really belonged to Social Gilds.

People of all ranks took part in these Religious Gilds. In some of them indeed certain classes were excluded. On the other hand, the same person might take part in several Religious Gilds. The members often had a special livery, as is still the case with certain Fraternities at Rome. These liveries were worn on their ecclesiastical festivals, and probably also at the great feastings and drinking-bouts which were often connected with them. Notwithstanding all the prohibitions against excessive feasting—the Gild statutes often declaring “that not eating and drinking, but mutual assistance and justice, were the principal objects of the Gild”—it still prevailed.

The Capitularies of Hincmar, under date A.D. 858, and which were believed to have been associated with the Gilds, contain ordinances against the extravagances of the priests at funeral meals, and at the feastings which used to follow their meetings, especially those of the priests of a deanery (or diaconasia), on the first of each month. No priest was to get drunk at them, nor was he to empty goblets to the health of saints, or of the soul of the deceased; nor was he to force others to drink, nor get drunk himself at the desire of others. The priests were not to burst out into indecent noise or roaring laughter; they were not to sing vain songs, nor tell inane jokes; nor were they to allow scandalous performances of bears or female dancers to be made before them; nor delight in other mummeries, “because this were heathenish, and forbidden by Canon Law.” Nor were they on every occasion to provoke each other, or anybody else, to passion and quarrels, and still less to fighting and murder; nor was he who was provoked, to assail at once his provoker. On the contrary, the priests were to breakfast with honesty

actors; and a tax was imposed on these licenses for the use of the poor, to which purpose all fines and forfeitures for disobedience were likewise to be applied. These regulations were followed by other restrictions. They [the actors] were enjoined not to play on Sundays, nor to act after dark, but to conclude so that the the audience might return home before sun-setting.” (P. 135.)

and fear of God ; holy stories and admonitions were to be read, and hymns sung, and everyone was to go home in good time. Exactly the same ordinances are contained in the Capitularies of Bishop Walter of Orleans. (*Vide* Brentano's Preliminary Essay.)

In later times the clergy assembled on the first day of each month to deliberate on their interests ; and here they became united into special fraternities, which—from their meeting-day on the Kalends of each month—were called the “Gilds of the Kalenders :” and these were probably the only Gilds which were composed entirely of ecclesiastics. In later times laymen took part even in these. (See Chapter V.)

The Reformation of the sixteenth century interfered greatly with the Gilds of the country generally, and with the Religious Gilds especially. This will be spoken of in some detail in later chapters.

It is well known that the Gilds, other than those of the purely religious order, kept up some sort of religious observances, at their annual feast at least, if not on ordinary occasions. In the *Liber Niger*, or Black Book of the Corporation of London, there is a description of the anniversary feast of the Gild of the Holy Cross at Abingdon, from which Blomefield probably drew the following details : “The fraternity hold their feast yearly on the 3rd May, the Invention of the Holy Cross ; and then they used to have 12 priests to sing a *Dirige*, for which they gave them 4d. apiece ; they had also 12 minstrels, who had 2s. 3d. besides their dyet and horse-meat. At one of these feasts (A.D. 1445) they had 6 calves, valued at 2s. 2d. a piece ; 16 lambs, 12d. a piece ; 80 capons, 3d. a piece ; 80 geese, 2d. a piece ; 800 eggs, which cost 5d. the 100, and many marrow bones, creame and floure ; besides what theyre servants and others brought in ; and pageants and plays and May-games, to captivate the senses of the zealous beholders.” If this were simply a Religious Gild, then it is clear that feasting formed as distinct a feature as it does with the Municipal or Social Gilds of the present day.

Dr. Rock, a Roman Catholic, offers the following eloquent defence of these religious festivals, and their influence on mankind :—

"Each Gild's first steps were bent towards their church, where solemn high mass was chanted ; thence went all the brotherhood to their hall for the festive dinner. The processions on the occasion, and other amusements so dear to Englishmen, when their country was merry England, were meant to be edifying and instructive, and helped religion to make her children both good and happy, through even their recreations. This present age, with its step-mother's chill heart, dull eye, and hard ironlike feelings, that sees nought but idleness in a few hours' harmless pause from toil, and knows nothing but unthriftiness in money spent in pious ceremonial, and thinks that the God who sprinkled the blue heaven with silvery stars, and strewed the green earth with sweet-breathing flowers of a thousand hues, and taught the birds to make every grove ring with their blithe songs, and told the little brook to run forth with a gladsome ripple, all in worship of Himself, can be best and most honoured by the highest and noblest of His wonderful works—the soul of man—the more gloomy, the more mopish, the sourer it is ; such an age will not understand the good which, in a moral and social point of view, was bestowed upon this country by the religious pageants, and pious plays and interludes of a bygone epoch. Through such means, however, not only were the working-classes furnished with a needful relaxation, but their merry-makings instructed while they diverted." (Church of our Fathers, &c., 1849, vol. ii. p. 418.)

It was in connection with these festivals that *Fairs* are supposed to have taken their origin, being held on the Saints' days, and not unfrequently in the churchyards, or in locations immediately adjoining.

A later and limited species of Religious Gilds are met with, of which some note should be taken. Such an one was founded at Dyrham, in Gloucestershire, in 1520—not many years before the Reformation of Henry VIII. A detailed account of it will be given in Part iii. of the present series. These were more after the manner of *Chantries*, endowed with revenues for priests to sing masses for the souls of the donors. Chantries were abolished in England in 1545.

The festivals known as *Wakes* were formerly held on Saints' days to commemorate the dedication of churches. These probably only

occurred where there was no Religious Gild in existence to conduct the ceremony. They were placed under regulation in 1536, and gradually died out, as associated with churches. They are still retained by the Irish Catholics, and have a lingering association (in name only) with religious observances.



CHAPTER V.

GILDS OF THE KALENDARS.

I HAVE shown how these took their rise out of the monthly meetings of the clergy, assembled to deliberate on Church affairs, and how—after the genius of the Middle Ages—they became converted into fraternities, afterwards called Gilds. It seems indeed probable that they had a very early origin, and were presumably introduced into this country during the Roman occupation. The Roman Calends were always considered sacred days, being so called, it has been supposed (*quasi colendæ*) from the veneration with which they were regarded. The care of regulating the year, and the public calendar, was entrusted, under the Roman polity, not to the consuls or prætor, or tribunes, but to the *Pontifex Maximus* (the high priest) and his college. The ancient Romans considered the regulation of the Calends of sufficient importance to be invested in their ministers of religion. Further, one of the principal offices of the Prior and co-brethren of the Calendars was to keep a public record of events, to superintend and regulate a library open to all the citizens under certain restrictions, and to explain to those who required such assistance any difficulties that arose in regard to these matters. See the Rev. Henry Rogers' account of the Fraternity of the Calendars of Bristol, to which more detailed reference will be made in Part iii., under "Bristol."

At first these Gilds were limited to the clergy, but at a later period laymen took part in them; and then the only distinction between these and the other Religious Gilds was, that whilst, proportionally, only a few clergymen belonged to the others (and even they were

sometimes expressly excluded from office), in these the clergy prevailed. Often the number of members was limited—sometimes to the number of the Apostles; at other times to twenty-four. In this case the roll of lay members was always fixed in proportion to that of the clerical members. Thus the Gild of St. Canute at Flensburg consisted, according to the statutes, from the year 1382 of twenty-four priests; but whenever this number could not be filled up, laymen might be admitted, but only to the number of eight, at the outside. The wives of laymen were, however, excluded from the meetings till the year 1422. In this year the Gild-book narrates that the ecclesiastical brothers were moved by the prayers of the lay brothers, repeated for several years, to grant the admission of their wives to the meals after the general meetings. There was, however, to be one condition: the wife of the lay brother, whose turn it was, had to provide the meal and to wait at table! The Mayor and his wife were to have the first turn.

The laymen, however, always remained in a subordinate position. At the meals they had seats separate from those of the priests—probably because the latter talked over their affairs at table—and in the deliberations the laymen had no vote. As among the other Religious Gilds there were special ones for various classes and ranks, so there existed also Gilds for the higher and the lower clergy, the so-called Major and Minor Gilds of the Kalendars.

One Gild of Kalendars existed in almost every town; in the larger towns even more. The organisation of these was the same as in other Gilds. Often the president was called Dean—perhaps a remnant of the origin of these Gilds. Often, too, the Gilds of the Kalendars had halls like other Gilds; and, as in the lay Gilds, the brothers of the ecclesiastical Gilds used to go there daily “to beer and to wine.” (Brentano, p. xc.)

These probably were the only Gilds which ever fell within the strict definition of *Religious Gilds*.

CHAPTER VI.

SOCIAL GILDS.

THESE, which constitute one great and broad division of Gilds, were founded upon the wide basis of brotherly aid and moral comeliness, without distinction (unless expressly specified) of calling or creed, and comprehended a great variety of objects. It is probable, indeed, that they did not stand out as a distinct class until after the Reformation; for up to that period all Gilds had been more or less strongly marked by those features which we have already assigned more especially to Religious Gilds. It seems, indeed, that, taken as a class, the Social Gilds are in truth the reformed Religious Gilds. There will be some exceptions marked out as we proceed.

The Social Gilds of which I here speak are such as were devoted to objects of good fellowship, to purposes of benevolence, and to the formation of provident habits; as distinguished from religious professions on the one hand, and trading and industrial pursuits on the other.

While religious observances were commonly associated with Gilds, these do not seem really to have formed any essential part of their constitution. This was declared very emphatically by Mr. Toulmin Smith, in his "Old Crown House" (Birmingham, p. 31).

These were not in any sense superstitious foundations; that is, they were not founded, like monasteries and priories, for men devoted to what were deemed religious exercises. Priests might belong to them, and often did so, in their private capacities. But the Gilds were lay bodies, and existed for lay purposes, and the better to enable those who belonged to them rightly and understandingly to fulfil their neighbourly duties as free men in a free State. . . . It is quite true that, as the Lord Mayor, and Lincoln's Inn, and many other as well-known personages and public bodies, have to this day a chaplain, so these old Gilds often took measures and made payments to enable the rites of religion to be brought more certainly within the reach of all who belonged to them. This was one of the most natural and becoming of the consequences fol-

lowing from their existence and character. It did not make them into superstitious bodies.

The instance of three Gilds at Cambridge is quoted in proof. In one of these (Gild of the Annunciation) priests are excluded altogether; in another, if they entered, they were to take no part in the management; while in the third, if the funds became low, the chaplain's pay was to be stopped, rather than infringe upon the allowance to the poor brethren.

There appears to have been usually no limit to the number of members of which a Gild of this class might be composed; although in some cases there was, and very naturally, a limit as to the rank of the members: for in a Gild in which members of high social rank were admitted, it might be fairly assumed that the contributions demanded would be higher than in the case of Gilds composed of the middle class only. The Gild of Corpus Christi, York, had the names of some 14,850 members on its rolls; while the numbers of the Gild of St. George at Norwich are known to have been very great. It is, however, probable that Gilds in the ordinary way consisted of a much smaller number of persons—very much after the manner of local friendly societies of the present day.

As to the rank of members, the Gild of St. Michael-on-the-Hill, Lincoln, declared its roll to be "of the rank of common and middling folks," and it did not wish to admit any of the rank of Mayor or Bailiff. The Gild of the Trinity, Coventry, admitted many famous men, even (on the authority of Dugdale) enrolling Kings Henry IV. and Henry VI. among its members; while in later times the Gild of St. Barbara of St. Katharine's Church, near the Tower of London, could point out Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey as brethren. (Strype's Stow.)



CHAPTER VII.

MERCHANT GILDS.

TO what period in the history of Gilds we may assign the origin of Merchant Gilds (*Gildæ Mercatoriæ*) is by no means an easy point to determine. It is known that they existed in England at a very early date, even in the Anglo-Saxon times. The Gilds of Dover, of the Thaness at Canterbury, as also perhaps the Gild-Merchant of London, are instances ; and some others will be noted as we proceed. At a somewhat later period are to be ranked the Gild-Merchant of York, the great Gild of St. John at Beverley, that of the Hanshouse of Beverley, as also that of the Blessed Mary at Chesterfield.

There seems good ground for believing that as early as the tenth century, and perhaps before, there was an order of monks in the North of Germany whose chief occupation was commerce, and who probably encouraged and protected the Gilds, as being in the direction of their aims. These were known as the *Grand Masters of the Teutonic Orders*. They founded a branch in London during the reign of Edward the Confessor, in the eleventh century, under the name of *Gilhalda Teutonicorum*. In this designation we have the direct derivation of the word *Gildhall*, the Hall of the Gilds ; which designation survives long after the Order itself has passed away. The Order in London became afterwards a branch of the *Hanseatic League* ; and yet later was designated as the *Merchants of the Steelyard*, which latter were swept away by Queen Elizabeth in 1597. The Lombards then reigned in their stead.

These Merchant Gilds are believed in many cases to have arisen quite independently of the towns wherein they were located ; but in other cases they seem from the beginning to have been identified with the town, and its corporate government. The Old Usages of Winchester contain many evidences of an early relationship of this kind between the Gild of Merchants there and the whole body of citizens ; and the same applies to the Ordinances of Worcester.

One of these Gilds-Merchant existed at York in the time of Henry

I. (1100-35). At this date the Gild of Beverley was constituted after its model. *It became the general rule to confirm the Gild of a town by granting it all the liberties which another town already enjoyed.* Wilda quotes from Madox, as towns which had received this confirmation under Henry II. (1154-89), Winchester, Shrewsbury, Andover, Southampton, Wallingford; under Richard I. (1189-99), Gloucester; under John (1199-1216), Helleston and Dunwich; under Henry III. (1216-72), Hereford. In the reign of this latter king the Gild of Chesterfield took its rise. I think it probable that whenever the king visited any town for the first time, especially during periods of war and civil commotion, and received aid and support from its inhabitants, that he either extended the privileges of its Gild, or, if this had been already done, that he granted it the rights of corporation.

But apart from instances of Royal favour, let us consider for a passing moment the natural course of events. Security from external dangers, and the maintenance of peace and good government in their towns, had obviously been among the original motives of the burghers in uniting themselves into Gilds. But as almost all Gild-brothers carried on trade, the once existing organisation was soon used for the furthering the common trade interests; for it was, as we have seen, in the nature of the Gild to provide generally for all wants which the family union was no longer sufficient to satisfy, and for the provisions of which the State was not yet developed and strong enough. To confederate in defence of liberty and right, was in itself the first requisite for the prosperity of trade and traffic. Moreover, it was the especial endeavour of the Gild to obtain privileges which would further trade: for instance, the right of coinage, staple-right, immunity from tolls, &c. The Gilds provided also for the regulation of industry, and for buying and selling; and for institutions such as the Cloth-Halls, with their severe control of wares, of which there existed one as early as 1060 at Valenciennes. The sooner the town became chiefly a commercial place, the sooner did the Gild there take the character of a Merchant-Gild. Though the Merchant-Gilds consisted chiefly of merchants, yet from the first craftsmen as such were not excluded from them. But of this I shall speak more in detail under Crafts-Gilds, Chapter IX.

Mr. Pike (*History of Crime*, vol. i. p. 64) offers some suggestive observations also upon the Gilds of this class: "Thus far the Gild has been regarded in only two of its aspects—as the Police-Gild, and as the Social-Gild. It has, however, another, and in later times more familiar aspect—as the Trading-Gild. How one sprang from another, or which was the first in origin, it would, perhaps, be impossible to determine with certainty. The Trading-Gild appears in more forms than one—as the Gild-Merchant, which it is difficult to distinguish from the Town-Corporation, and as the Gild of Craftsmen. The Craft-Gilds do not come into notice before the Norman Conquest, but, on the other hand, they show themselves soon afterwards, and there seems to be no good reason for denying them any previous existence. An antiquity extending at least as far back as the time of Edward the Confessor is claimed for the Gild-Merchant, and allowed, in the later charters, to some of the Towns; the Gild-hall of the Burgesses at Dover, and the Gild of Burgesses at Canterbury, are mentioned in Domesday-book. In the earliest record of the Exchequer after Domesday, the Gilds of Weavers appear to be regularly constituted, and perfectly familiar to the revenue officers."

In the 30th Henry III. (1245) a charter was "granted and confirmed to John Mauncell, parson of the church of Wygan," setting forth "that his town of Wygan should be a borough for ever, and that the burgesses should have Gild-Merchant with *hansa*, and all the liberties and free customs to such Gild belonging, with the privileges to the burgesses of sok and sak, tol and them, attachments within the borough, infangenthef and utfangenthef, and exemption from toll, lestage, pontage, passage, and stallage over land and at all seaports, and freedom from suit or service to the county or wapentak for their lands within the borough; with the further provision that merchant strangers and others, on paying the customary dues, should have freedom to pass into the borough with their merchandise, and safely there remain, and safely thence return." (*Vide* Baines, *Lancashire* (1836), iii. 530.)

It was probably at the instance of the Gilds-Merchant that the *Hanseatic League* was founded. The important part which it played

in the commerce of Europe during several centuries will be known to many of my readers.

Under date May 29, 1261, Edward, Earl of Chester (afterwards Edward I.), granted by charter to his burgesses of Macclesfield (*inter alia*), "That our burgesses of the same town have a Merchant-Gild in the same borough, with all the liberties and free customs to such Gild appertaining. This was in fact a monopoly of trade into the hands of the Brotherhood of the Gild. This privilege was confirmed by subsequent monarchs. The restriction did not apply during the limits of the *fairs*. These latter came in course of time to be great modifiers of local monopolies.

The "Custumal of Preston," given in Dobson and Harland's "History of Preston Gild" (2nd ed. p. 73), contains the following:—

"1. So that they shall have a Gild-mercatory, with Hanse, and other customs and liberties belonging to such Gild; and so that no one who is not of that Gild shall make any merchandise in the said town, unless with the will of the burgesses.

"2. If any *nativus* [born bondmen] dwell anywhere in the same town, and hold any land, and be in the forenamed Gild and Hanse, and pay lot and scot with the same burgesses for one year and one day, then he shall not be reclaimed by his lord, but shall remain free in the same town."

Other references to these will occur in subsequent chapters.

In the reign of Edward III. these Merchant-Gilds were charged with combining, nay, even conspiring to enhance the price of provisions. Thus in the 37th of this reign (1363) there was enacted "A Statute concerning Diet and Apparel," which recites as follows:—

"V. *Item*. For the great mischiefs that have happened as well as to the king as to the great men and commons of the realm, that the merchants, called grocers, do engross all manner of merchandise vendible; and suddenly do enhance the price of such merchandise within the realm, putting to sale by covin and ordinance made betwixt them, called the Fraternity and Gild of Merchants, the merchandise which be most dear, and keep in store the other, till the time that dearth or scarcity be of the same; it is ordained, that no English Merchant shall use no ware nor merchandise by him nor by other, nor by no manner of covin, but only one, which he shall choose betwixt this and the Feast of Candlemas next ensuing."

Surveyors, consisting of "good people and lawful of every merchandise" were to be appointed to see to the due carrying out of these

provisions. This Act was repealed by 38 Edward III. cap. 2 (1363-4), under which all buying and selling was declared *free*, with certain reservations.



CHAPTER VIII.

TOWN OR CORPORATION GILDS.

I THINK it may be fairly assumed that this class of Gilds (Burg-Gilds) arose out of the progressive action of the Frith-Gilds and of the Craft-Gilds; and probably in part out of the conflict which came to be waged between the two. Nearly all writers upon this portion of Gild history have been perplexed, and have failed to make clear alike the period and the precise elements of the transition. I do not expect to be able entirely to clear up a problem which has defied accumulated volumes. The Gilds-Merchant in some cases appear to have led directly up to Corporate-Gilds; for which indeed the latter was but another name.

In a charter granted by Edward II. (1307-27) to the citizens of London, it was provided that no person, whether an inhabitant of the City or otherwise, should be admitted into the civil freedom, unless he was a member of one of the Trades or Mysteries, or unless with the full consent of the whole community convened; only, that apprentices might still be admitted according to the established form. Norton says, "Before this, no mention occurs of any mercantile qualification to entitle the householder to his admission to the Corporation." (Commentaries on London, 120.)

In 49 Edward III. (1375) an enactment was passed in the assembled commonalty of the City, by which the right of election of all City dignitaries and officers, including Members of Parliament, was transferred from the Ward representatives to the Trading Companies; a few members of which were directed to be selected by the masters or wardens to come to the Guildhall for election purposes; and in them it has continued to the present time: only that by a subsequent Act of Common Council, it was opened to all the liverymen of Companies generally; and that right, which indeed

without such sanction had no legal authority, was finally confirmed to such liverymen, as being freemen of the Corporation of London, by Stat. 11 Geo. I. c. 18 (1724). (Herbert's Great Livery Companies of London, vol. i. p. 32.)

Dr. Brentano suggests that when, after the ordinance under Edward II., all citizens of London were obliged to belong to Trade-Gilds, the old burghers probably entered (as in a similar case the old ruling families of Cologne did) into some of the better Trade-Gilds, from which in later days sprang the so-called twelve great Companies of the City (London); and that they pursued under new shapes their old political and industrial interests. Already, towards the end of the reign of Edward III., the separation of these richer Companies from the poorer ones may be observed. They gained permanent influence in the Common Council; and from this time dates the still-existing custom of choosing the Mayor of London exclusively from them.

In the following century—reign of Henry VI.—the victory of the Crafts was general in England; for about that time the kings (as Madox tells us) began generally to recognise the constitution and liberties of towns in other terms than by confirming their Gilds. "They granted to the men of a town or burgh that they should be a *communitas perpetua et corporata*—a corporate and perpetual community." The Craft-Gilds, whose rise the old City authorities had endeavoured till now to suppress, obtained the victory in the manner we have already traced in our account of them.

Dr. Brentano says further: "A short examination of the Statutes of the Town-Gilds will justify our claim for these confederations of towns to be shoots from the same root, fruits from the same tree, and higher stages of the same development from which the Frith-Gilds sprang. From the time when these Frith-Gilds stood at the head of the towns, their Statutes show, without a particle of change, the essential nature of the Gilds as disclosed by the Gild-Statutes of Cambridge. These Gilds appear as an enlarged great family, whose object is to afford such assistance to their members in all circumstances of life as one brother might expect from another; and consequently, above all things, protection against the unbridled

arbitrariness of the mighty—whether exercised by violence, or attempted at law by means of numerous friends as compurgators. The Gilds do not appear, however, as associations for instituting a new law, but for maintaining the laws already existing ; for supplementing a system of order as yet defective and only in course of development ; and for guarding in common against the dangers attending a weak Government."

Many of the towns whose government was in the hands of Gilds of this class—especially those accessible by the sea—had been founded by merchants. Like the modern so-called "Factories" of Asia and Africa, the old merchants fortified places from which they carried on trade with the surrounding people. But in all other towns also the great majority of the more respectable burghers lived by trade. In some cities the law-merchant, *i.e.* the law of the Gild, prevailed, as to matters in the city, and not the general law of the land. The Corporation of the Paris Merchants stood at the head of the government of that city at a very early date. It is supposed that the constitution of London was originally based on that of a Gild. (Brentano, pp. civ.-v.)

Mr. M'Culloch, who had made an elaborate study of the progress of commerce, points out that the Gilds which existed at an early period in most boroughs of any importance, consisted of associations of those carrying on different trades (Craft-Gilds), similar in some respects to the colleges of workmen among the ancient Romans, formed for the purpose of watching over their common interests, and of managing their common property. The spirit of monopoly and exclusion, he thinks, gave strength and consistence to these institutions. Their members gradually acquired various privileges ; and having also, in certain matters, a separate jurisdiction exercised by their own officers in their own Guildhalls, they generally succeeded, in no long time, in engrossing the privileges and jurisdiction that originally belonged to the burgesses at large ; so that the borough itself was sometimes merged in the Gild-Merchant, or combination of the separate Gilds. The substitution of the title of freeman for that of burgess, which took place in many boroughs, appears to have been a consequence of this change ; and no doubt originated in the

custom of admitting certain persons, either through apprenticeship or purchase, to the freedom of the Gilds or subsidiary corporations. This is particularly seen in the City of London, where the rights of burgesses have long been in the exclusive possession of the liverymen or freemen of the different Trading Companies : though the old division into wards, and the mode of election according to wards, still subsists. (M'Culloch's *British Empire*, vol. ii. pp. 292-3.)

On the other hand, where the government of a town was found simply taking the form of a Gild, it has been supposed that the circumstance may have originated by a combination of the Frith-Gilds. "According to the '*Judicia Civitatus Lundoniæ*' of the time of King Athelstan, the Frith-Gilds of London united to form one Gild that they might carry out their aims the more vigorously. This united Gild governed the town ; as is proved by the fact that their regulations bound even non-members. The occasion of this union was perhaps that here, as afterwards in other places, other Gilds had gradually formed by the side of the original sole Gild, and rivalries between the old and the new prejudiced the attainment of the aim of the Gilds—the protection of freedom and of right. Possibly the English Knighten-Gild was this original one. According to Madox the alderman of the Knighten-Gild was the alderman of the Merchant-Gild of the City. Nor is our conjecture contradicted by Stow's statement as to the date of the origin of this Gild : for this was probably only a sanction for the Gild's possession of landed property which it had received from King Edgar. It would not of course require royal permission to come into existence. The Knighten-Gild had possession and jurisdiction both within and without the City. . . . It was thus probably a Gild like that of the Thanes of Canterbury." (Brentano, p. xcix.)

We learn from the same authority that a similar union took place three centuries later at Berwick-upon-Tweed. In the years 1283-4 the townsmen of Berwick agreed upon the statutes of a single united Gild : "That where many bodies are found side by side in one place, they may become one, and have one will, and, in the dealings of one toward another, have a strong and hearty love." Art. i. therefore provides that "all separate Gilds heretofore existing in the

borough shall be brought to an end," and that "no other Gild shall be allowed in the borough." All formerly existing Gilds were to hand over to this one Gild the goods rightfully belonging to them, and "all shall be as members having one head; one in counsel, one body strong and friendly." The way in which this statute was drawn up is considered to show clearly that "citizen" and "Gild-brother" were considered identical. It also contained a series of regulations concerning the administration of the town, the police of the markets, and various other points of municipal interest. The words of the preamble and of the 1st article showed that, before the union of the various Gilds, rivalries detrimental to the body of the citizens had sprung up. The succeeding articles make it clear that only the better inhabitants, the merchants, were Gild-brethren and citizens; and several of the articles pointed out that at least one of the consolidated Gilds had been a Frith-Gild, which originally coincided with the whole body of citizens. (See "*Berwick-upon-Tweed*," 1388, part iii.)

It may further be that this first Gild included—as was the case in Canterbury—the old families, the original possessors of the soil in and around the town, who either then or afterwards carried on trade; or that it acquired with the growth of the town an aristocratic family character, as was the case in many German towns; or that it limited for other reasons the number of its members. Then new Gilds arose, whose members were but little, or not at all, behind those of the first, either in rank, social consideration, or wealth, and who therefore strove for an equal share in the government of the town. This led, in Berwick, to the above-noticed amalgamation of the Gilds; and in the German cities to a participation in the town councils.

The case of Daventry (Northamptonshire) is even more to the point. Tradition attributes the incorporation of this borough to King John; but though its earliest extant charter was not granted till the 18th of Elizabeth, yet the prior existence of a Merchant-Gild here is indisputable, and may with confidence bordering on certainty be identified with the ancient Gild or fraternity in the chapel of the Holy Trinity, whose former incumbent, John Chamberleyne, had an

annual pension of £5 in 1553. But even admitting this to refer to a religious fraternity only, the proof of a civil or commercial one will be found among the Corporation archives in a MS. volume containing its internal economy and finances from the 16th of Elizabeth; by which it appears that each trade or company had two wardens, who paid into the chamber the fines received from foreigners (strangers) for admission to freedom, or the right of exercising their trades in the town; and two bailiffs were annually chosen to superintend and govern the whole community. Consecutive accounts of the "quarterages" of the different wardens are given, and a distinct entry is made at detached pages of the names of the companies of the "Mersers, Wollendrap's, Taylers, Inkepers, and Fullers, with their wardens;" the "Shomakers, Tanners, Whittawaes, Glovers, and Smithes, with their wardens;" and the "Husbandmen, Butchers, Victelers [traders in the necessities of life, as bakers, &c.], Dyers and Weavers, with their wardens." The bailiff's account for 1574 is headed thus:—"William Salter and Henry Roper were chosen Bayleves of Daventre 29 Sept. 1574 (16 Eliz.) who took the office upon them at the feaste of All Saints (1 Nov.) then next followinge for one whole yeare." The said bailiffs made their account upon the feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary (2 Feb.), "before the Burgesses and Wardens of everie companie of all the Receipts since they came into their office, xxix^{li} ix^s vi^d, whereof they have paid for the town in repairing of the Hall shoppes and other things for the said Town, xxxi^{li} xvi^s vi^d, so that the town doth owe the sayd Bayleves xlvij^s, whereof Robert Parker must have of the same xxvij^s." All the parochial disbursements seem to have passed through their hands, as may be inferred from various items similar to the following: "The said bayleves have paid for the town for mole taking, dressing of the halle, the clerk and sexton's wages," &c., &c. To this antecedent constitution of things the charter granted by Queen Elizabeth bears a strong analogy; the two chief officers were reduced to one, but the name of bailiff and the day of election were retained, and the accounts of the wardens continued to be entered in the same volume without any variation of form." (See Baker's Northamptonshire, 1822-30, vol. i. p. 318.)

Sir William Blackstone says tersely : “ Such of these Gilds as were commercial gradually took the shape of our municipal corporations, whose place of meeting, it may be observed, is still called the Guild-hall.” Of this class were the Gilds of Beverley, Coventry, Berwick, and some others to be hereafter spoken of more in detail.

Maitland (*History of Edinburgh, 1753*) gives the following account bearing upon the origin of Municipal-Gilds, differing in some views from any other we have seen :

“ Towns being erected in the neighbourhood of castles for their protection, had the name of Burgh or Burgs given to them ; and as the soldiers who garrisoned the said Burghs were called Burghers, so the inhabitants of the towns or new burghs likewise received the name of Burghers—now corruptly Burgesses ; and the said Burgesses being formed into a community, the constitutions made for their good government were denominated the Burg or Borough Laws, and the Burgesses or inhabitants of the said Burghs, perceiving the benefit resulting from the said community, erected themselves into Companies or Gilds, as their several interests led them. But those societies being regarded by some Burghs as spurious, for being set up without their authority, dissolved them, and in their stead constituted a general society or corporation of merchants, denominated the Gild. An instance whereof we had in the year 1283, by Robert Durbane, Mayor of Berwick upon the river Tweed. . . . But when or by whom Edinburgh was constituted a Burgh Royal, I cannot ascertain ; yet that it is one of the most antient in Scotland, I think is manifest, by its being the principal of the four Burghs in the year 1348, when David II. in a parliament held at Perth ordained that, as long as the Burghs of Berwick and Roxburgh, which had been two of the said four Burghs, remained in the possession of the English, the Burghs of Lanark and Linlithgow should be put in their stead. And as in that Act it is said that these four Burghs in ancient times held the Chamberlain’s Court annually at Haddington, in the county of East Lothian, it is thereby evident that Edinburgh must be one of the most antient of the said Royal Burghs.”

When he comes to speak of the Gild in Edinburgh, he adds :—

“ This fraternity, being a company of merchants, commonly called

the Gildry, is the first and most antient corporation in Edinburgh ; and, like other Gilds throughout Scotland, owes its origin to that of Berwick, above mentioned ; but when or by whom incorporated I cannot learn. Be that as it will, the magistrates and common councilmen of this city were, for divers ages, chosen out of the same, exclusive of the trades or craftsmen ; nay, in effect, they are so still, by a majority of merchants of the Town Council ; whereby they carry things according to their mind, unless divided amongst themselves, which seldom happens.

“The chief officer of this community is entitled the Dean of Gild, who, assisted by a council consisting of three merchants and three tradesmen, chosen by the common council, determine all differences betwixt merchants, and between them and mariners, with the greatest despatch, in a summary way. To them belong the superintendency of all buildings, both public and private, within the city and liberties, both in respect to their construction and repairs, for preventing mischief which otherwise might happen by their not being carefully inspected. They also admit persons into the freedom of the city, adjust weights and measures, and prevent forestalling staple commodities, as set forth in the constitutions of the Dean of Gilds’ Court, above recited.”

Regarding the determination of disputes by the Gild as here stated, it seems a power analogous to that exercised by the Chambers of Assurance in England at an early date.

Some further evidences of the authority exercised by the Gilds of Scotland will be given in our next chapter.



CHAPTER IX.

MERCHANT GILDS.

THESE, which embody the other and broad class of Gilds (as distinguished from Social Gilds), were formerly very numerous—probably at least one for every trade carried on in large cities. They shared, in their constitution, many of the principles of the Social Gilds ; but they were formed for the benefit of their mem-

bers as craftsmen, *i.e.*, manufacturing traders, and for the regulation of their crafts. In this latter respect they have been supposed to bear some analogy to the Trades Unions of modern times; but in truth there is hardly any analogy. The craftsmen of the middle ages were really masters, struggling to maintain political and mercantile freedom. The era of workmen so socially debased as to be always workmen, and nothing more, had not commenced.

It seems clear that in earlier times the craftsmen were frequently members of the Merchant-Gilds. The strict separation which at a later date existed between the Merchants and the Craftsmen did not then prevail; and probably only came about by degrees later. Originally the craftsmen traded in the raw materials which they worked with. Thus the London tailors were even in the time of Edward III. (1327—77) the great importers of woollen cloth; and as late as the 16th century the brewers of Hamburg were the principal grain-merchants. The growth of wealth and of the number of the people necessarily called forth greater division of labour; the full citizens having become rich, only carried on trade, whilst the handicraft was left exclusively to the poor and the unfree. The poor were originally excluded from full citizenship and from the Gild by the want of a property qualification; and when, in consequence of the development which has just been explained, the poor and the craftsmen became identical, this led to the ordinance repeated in the Danish, German, and Belgian Gild-Statutes, that no one "with dirty hands" or "with blue nails," or "who hawked his wares in the streets," should become a member of the Gild; and that craftsmen, before being admitted, must have forsworn their trade for a year and a day.

The stipulation in the Statutes of Skanör, under date 1266, "that no baker should henceforth be accepted as a member of the Gild," belongs probably to the transition period already spoken of; but it has been surmised that the bakers there had formerly been corn-merchants too. Such a state of transition is also to be inferred from the Statutes of Berwick (see 1388, part iii., Northumberland), according to which no butcher, as long as he carried on his trade, was to deal in wool or hides; in order to do so he must forswear his axe. The

facts here appear to be that the Gild of Berwick was a decided Merchant-Gild, and that the members traded chiefly in wool or hides. Formerly this branch of trade was unquestionably carried on by the butchers. But after the craftsmen had been excluded from the Gild, the butchers were forbidden to carry on a trade practised by the Gild members. A like case was when the old town of Gant (Ghent) forbade, in favour of the Gild-Merchant there, that clothes should be dyed for craftsmen.

But the exclusion of the craftsman from these Merchant-Gilds was not all ; they soon assumed first to rule him, and then to oppress him. This led to civil strife in some parts of Europe, and to a fierce conflict in England. The craftsmen contended for equality of political rights and of justice. In the end mixed governing bodies were formed, consisting of the landed aristocracy on the one hand and the manufacturing traders (craftsmen) on the other. "In some places it is true the craftsmen compelled the patricians to enter their fraternities if they wished to take part in the government of the towns ; but even then the great soon got such paramount influence, that new laws had to provide that the 'small folk' should form half of the council of the Craft-Gild. The craftsmen did not, however, in the long run, remain at the head of the town ; but the political equality which their efforts had obtained was maintained in principle ; the old Gild constitution was replaced by that of the 'commune.'" (Brentano, p. cxi.)

This leads up to Corporation or Town Gilds, of which I have already spoken.

Dr. Brentano further remarks that after the free handicraftsmen had been expelled from the full citizens' [corporate] Gilds, their relation to the old burghers was similar to that of the ancient freemen at the time when they confederated into Gilds for protection against the aggressions of the great. On the one hand, the citizens endeavoured to suppress the handicraftsmen into a kind of subjection, and on the other, it was in their power to take measures injurious to the craftsmen. Isolated, the latter must have succumbed to the difficulty of their circumstances : hence these of necessity called forth the same free organisation of free craftsmen as that of the old free-

men in earlier times. "The constitution of the old Gilds evidently served as a model of the Craft-Gilds, and it appears to have been altered only in so far as a change was rendered necessary by the peculiar wants of the craftsmen which made them confederate into Gilds, namely, protection of the industry of the freemen."

The transfer of all trade concerns in towns to the management and jurisdiction of the Craft-Gild, to which we have already referred, was generally accomplished by a confirmation of their Ordinances, that everyone carrying on the trade within the town or a certain district should join and belong to the Gild. And in return for this privilege the Gild was yearly to pay certain taxes. In London these taxes went to the King. Thus, under Henry I. (1100-33), and every succeeding king, the London weavers paid to the crown a rent or ferme for their gild; and Madox enumerates eighteen Gilds which, under Henry II. (1154-89), were amerced as adulterine, for neglecting to pay this tax. But as, in consequence of these privileges of the Craft-Gilds, the citizens no longer enjoyed undivided sway in the towns, they showed themselves everywhere extremely jealous of the jurisdiction which had thus sprung up in their midst, to their own detriment. They therefore opposed with all their might the establishment of Craft-Gilds; and the whole history of these Gilds, till they obtained the mastery in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, appears as nothing else but one continual struggle of the handicraftsmen with the town for these privileges. The Norman kings, however, equally ready to make the most of both these clashing interests for the benefit of their exchequer, seem to have put up to auction the confirmation and the suppression of these Gilds. As to the jealousies which existed between the Town and the Gilds, see Exeter, 1388, part iii.

The organisation of the free craftsmen into Gilds Dr. Brentano considers was called forth by their want of protection against the abuse of power on the part of the lords of the town, who tried to reduce the free to the dependence of the unfree, and, by imposts and otherwise, to encroach on the freemen's earnings. Being organised, the Craft-Gildmen provided for the maintenance of the customs of their Craft, framed further Ordinances for its regulation, saw these

Ordinances properly executed, and punished the Gild-brothers who infringed them. The maintenance of their independence against the city authorities, and the possibility of carrying them out and making efficient their trade-rules, depended, however, on the condition that all who carried on the trade should belong to the Gild.

And though the first Gilds, at their formation, included doubtless all men of the trade, yet in course of time some one or more craftsmen must have turned up, *who, unwilling to submit to the rules framed for insuring good work, and for protecting the interests of the trade, would carry on his trade without belonging to the Gild.* It was impossible either to check this, and prevent detriment arising from it, or to enforce their regulation of the trade in a legitimate manner, unless the Gild had been previously acknowledged by the lord of the town, or the body of citizens. And thus, though the Craft-Gilds as voluntary societies did not need confirmation by the authorities at their birth, yet this confirmation became afterwards of the greatest importance when these Gilds wanted to be recognised as special and independent associations, which were thenceforth to regulate the trade, instead of the authorities of the town. This once obtained, all further protective measures would follow as a matter of course.

For the complete independence of the Craft-Gilds, it was indispensable that they should have the right of freely electing a Warden for regulating their trade, and for managing the Gild. In England this freedom seems never to have been restricted. But on the Continent the right of appointing the Warden of a Craft-Gild varied according to the nature of the origin of the Gild, or the degree of independence which the particular handicraft enjoyed at the time when its Gild was recognised. In Dr. Brentano's Essay many instances of this are cited.

Mr. Pike also speaks of the monopolising character of the Craft-Gilds, as they came to grow in importance, and traces its influence upon the individual members :—

“As a Gildsman of the later kind, he would apparently have been in a position somewhat like that of a modern workman who works not for a master, but for his own profit, and who might be fairly called a

small tradesman. The object of the Craft-Gild was to protect such workers against the competition of persons who were not members, just as one object of the Gild recognised in the earliest charters was to secure collectively as great a monopoly as possible for the particular town in which it was established. It was not founded, like modern Trades-Unions, to assert the rights of labour against capital, but to keep the market for the goods supplied by its members to those members exclusively. As, however, capital gradually increased, a new phase of society presented itself. The Craft-Guild became powerless, and even meaningless, so far as the mere workmen was concerned, and useful only to his employer. The City Companies, famous for the banners which they exhibit on the 9th of November, and for their hospitality at other seasons, are, it is almost needless to remark, little in common with those combinations of Craftsmen which have become prominent in the 19th century." (*Vide Hist. of Crime*, vol. i. p. 378. See 1272—1307, chapter iii.)

The fundamental principle of the Craft-Gilds was much the same as that of the Frith-Gilds. Like these, the object of the early Craft-Gilds was to create relations as if among brothers; and, above all things, to grant to their members that assistance which the member of a family might expect from that family. As men's wants had become different, this assistance no longer concerned the protection of life, limbs, and property; but the principal object of the Craft-Gilds was to secure their members in the independent, unimpaired, and regular earning of their daily bread by means of their craft. When then the Craft-Gilds, like the earlier Town-Gilds for the maintenance of justice, were legally recognised, and were brought into the State organism as special Associations for the regulation of their trade, a new fundamental element, namely, their quality as a police authority, was added to the element common to all Gilds. "Both these elements were to be found in the Craft-Gilds of all countries; indeed, in all they attained a development so similar, even in details, *that whosoever knows the Gild-Statutes of one country, knows those of all.*" Only in certain concrete regulations were there deviations; and these have been pointed out in detail in Dr. Brentano's Essay.

The *income* of the Gilds of this class consisted of small entrance

fees ; of wax for the churches ; and of taxes which were levied for special purposes as they occurred : for instance, on the death, impoverishment, pilgrimage, &c., of a member. Regular periodical contributions are only met with at a later stage.

The *Rules*, to which all the men of the trade had to submit, had reference (1) partly to *securing the good quality of the work* ; and (2) partly, like all Gild-statutes, to the temporal and eternal welfare of their members. On the plea of ensuring the good quality of their wares, the Gild-statutes often ordain that “no one shall work longer than from the beginning of the day until curfew,” nor “at night by candle-light.” But Dr. Brentano considers that the real ground for this regulation was regard for the well-being of the Gild brothers ; “it was the wish to give them leisure for fulfilling their domestic and political duties ; and to prevent the collective body from being forced to over-exertions by the competition of a few too zealous for gain, and from being thus deprived of every enjoyment of life.” Similar considerations, he thinks, were sometimes the cause for long holidays : as, for instance, the prohibition of the London weavers to work between Christmas and Purification Day (Feb. 2nd). The same considerations, *supported by religious motives*, caused the strict prohibition of work on Sundays and festivals, and “on Saturday or the eve of a double feast, after noon has been rung.” This last ordinance, forbidding work on the last-mentioned afternoons, was common to all countries, and had its origin in a custom of the Roman Catholic Church to solemnise the eve of festivals and Sundays by religious services. The Saturday afternoon holiday was in truth as common in England in the 13th and 14th centuries as it is now ; but it was lost at the Reformation—only to be re-established during the present century, for another reason, viz., that of allowing members of Volunteer regiments to attend to their training.

There were other restrictions arising from this general tendency to prevent a ruinous competition amongst Gild brothers, as being contrary to the spirit of brotherhood. Their ordinances were framed for the “better relief and comodytie of the porer sorte.” There were restrictions, too, as to the number of servants and apprentices which an individual member might have ; also, as long as members of the

Gild were out of work, no member was to work with non-members. And at an early period regulations as to prices, under supervision of the town authorities, became common. Hence it is sometimes contended that modern trades-unionism is but a revival of the old spirit of the Craft-Gilds. We think the analogy is but a superficial one !

There were not unfrequently several Gilds relating to the same Craft in the same town : for instance, in London there were originally two Gilds of Tanners—one without Newgate, and one without Crip-legate ; and there were four Weavers' Gilds at Cologne in the 13th century. " Sometimes the richer craftsmen withdrew from their poorer brethren into separate Gilds—as, for instance, the Shoemakers from the Cobblers ; the Tanners from the Shoemakers." (*Brentano*, p. cxxxix.)

I shall have to return to these Craft-Gilds in the succeeding chapter.



CHAPTER X.

TRADE OR CRAFT GILDS.

THE early Craft-Gilds did unquestionably aim at establishing a community of interests among their members. Hence it was sometimes enacted that no Gild-associate was to entice away a brother's customers, nor a brother's servant. Other statutes preclude working for a customer who was indebted to a brother. Others provided that any member becoming poor from " adventures on the sea, or the advanced price of merchandise, or by borrowing and pledging, or by any other misfortunes," might claim to be relieved in proportion to the fraternity's funds. Even as late as 1723 the bye-laws of the Gild of the Joiners and Carpenters of Worcester ordained, " that wherever any freeman buys any parcel of timber or boards coming to the city to be sold, and fit for the crafts, every freeman may have a share therein, not exceeding [in the whole ?] a third, at cost price, on request, and paying ready money, under penalty of 20s. for refusing to share." In some of the Gild-

statutes there were, after the manner of the time, sumptuary laws, and especially with reference to apprentices. On the other hand, the common feast, held frequently in their own magnificent halls, was a general feature. Is not the annual Cutlers' feast at Sheffield a modern continuation of the same practice?

In 1633 the Judges of Assize were ordered to inquire into a petition of the Society of Skinners, Whittawers, and Glovers, in Wigan, Preston, in Amounderness, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester, and Newton-in-Makerfield, complaining of interlopers in their trade. (*Vide Palatine Note-book*, i. 213.)

As instances of the powers assumed by the Craft-Gilds in their more modern form, the following are given from original sources:—

1701. *Act of the Gild Court, against Unfree Traders and Others:*
Edinburgh, Mar. 19, 1703.

The Dean of Gild and his Council, considering the prejudice Freemen Burgesses of this City suffer, by reason that several persons within this City, who are neither Burgesses nor Children of Burgesses, nor have any particular Liberty, keep Shops great or small, Cellars or others for selling of Ware or Drink; and sich like, That several Burgesses of this City, contrary to the Acts of Parliament, Acts of the Royal Burrows, and of this Burgh, keep two or three Shops or Cellars at once: Do therefore expressly *Prohibit* all such unfree Persons, after the term of *Whitsunday* next, to keep any such Shops or Cellars; with Certification, their Shops and others shall be shut up and they Amerciat at the Discretion of the Dean of Gild and his Council; As also, That no Burgesses keep more Shops or Cellars than one, after the said Term, under the like certification: But prejudice to the prosecuting of the Burgesses who keep moe Cellars and Shops, or unfree Traders in any sort, either before or after the said Term of *Whitsunday* as records, and appoints these presents to be Printed and Published by Tuck of Drum, that none may pretend ignorance.—Extracted furth of the new Locked Gild Book, by Geo. Home.

Same year. Act of the Gild Court anent the Elnwand. Edinburgh, March 19, 1701.

The Dean of Gild and his Council considering, That it is reasonable that all Merchants and Shopkeepers within the City should make use of one uniform measure, conform to the said Act of Parliament made thereanent. It is therefore *Statute and Ordained* That all Merchants and Shopkeepers within this City shall make use of the *Scots* Elnwand allennarly, and that they bring their Elnwands to the Laigh Council House, betwixt [*sic*] and the fifteen day of April next to come, to the end that they be Marked with the Dean of Gild's mark, where they shall be attended by two members of the Dean of Gild Court for that effect, each Wednesday and Friday betwixt two and four afternoon; Certifying each person who contravenes this present Act, that they shall be lyable in payment of the sum of ten pounds *Scots* to the Dean of Gild, and hereby Prohibites and Discharges all Merchants and Shopkeepers and others within this City to use the *English* Yard, or any other measure whatsoever but the Elnwand aforesaid in measuring of Cloath and others for sale, swa marked by the Dean of Gild, under the penalty aforesaid. And to the end that none may pretend ignorance hereof appoints these presents to be Printed and Published by Tuck of Drum.—Extracted furth of the new Locked Gild Book by Geo. Home.

1728. *Act appointing all Merchants to use the Yard-Wand, and no other Measure. Edinburgh, the Thirteenth day of November, 1728.*

The which Day the Dean of Guild and his Council, considering that many abuses have of late been committed by the Sellers and Retailers of Linnen and Woollen Cloths, Silk-Stuffs, &c., by the using of Yard-Measures not agreeable to the Standard kept by the Dean of Gild, and that some Merchants do use the Elnwand in place of the Yard-Measure in the buying of Linnen, contrary to the late Act of Parliament directing the Yard-Measure alone, and no

other to be used in the buying and selling thereof. Therefore, to prevent these abuses, and that there may be an Uniformity observed in both buying and selling in Time coming, They *Statute and Ordain*, That all Merchants and Retailers of Linnen and Wollen Cloths, Silk-Stuffs, &c., within this City and Privileges thereof, shall in time coming keep and use the Yard-Measure alone, Marked and Stamped with the Dean of Gilds Mark, and no other, in both buying and selling of all Linnen and Woollen Cloths, Silk-Stuffs of all kinds, and all other Manufactured Goods that are sold by Measure, and that under the penalty of Twenty Pound *Scots* for each Transgression, by and attour repairing the Loss and Damage that any Buyer or Seller shall sustain by the not punctual observance: And to the end, That all dealers in Woolen and Linnen Cloths, Silk Stuffs, &c., may be served with such Yards, they appoint their Officers to provide a sufficient Quantity of them, which shall be tried with the Gaudge, and marked and stamped, at the Sight of Two of the members of the Court; and thereafter One or more, if desired, to be delivered to each Merchant or Retailer, at their Shop, within the space of Fourteen Days, after the date hereof. For which the said Officers shall only exact and demand eighteen-pence *sterling* for each Yard, marked and stamped as above; Certifieing such as shall refuse to give obedience to this Act, That they will be proceeded against as contemnners of the said Act of Parliament, and for the penalties therein, as above directed.—Extracted furth of the Records of the Gild Court by me, *George Home*, Clerk thereof. (Signed, George Home.)

1729. *At Edinburgh the Twenty-third day of April, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty-nine Years.*

The which Day, The Lord Provost, Ballies, Council, and Deacons of Crafts, Ordinary and Extraordinary, having taken into their consideration, That by the laws of the land, and by the Rights and Infestments granted in favours of this City, 'tis unlawful to, or for any person to use, exercise, or occupy any Branch of Trade or Craft within this City or Liberties except such as are Burgesses and Free-

men thereof allenarly, and that notwithstanding there are several unfree Persons of both Sexes, do presume to use, exercise, and occupy several Branches of Trade within this City and Liberties, which is injurious to the Freemen thereof, who have paid for their Freedom, and on whom the Public Taxes are imposed, and whereby also that branch of the Revenue arising to the Town from the Upsets, and Entries of Burgesses is greatly diminished: And likewise considering that several persons offending as aforesaid, would cheerfully purchase their Freedom, had they ability to do it, and that their Poverty only hinders them from acquiring their Freedom, and that the executing against them the Laws made against Unfree Traders would not only be a hardship upon them, but also would be hurtful to the community, by disabling Nos. of the Inhabitants from holding House, and thereby making them Objects of the Town's Charity. Further considering, That by the ancient laws and laudable practice of the Royal Burrows, such of their inhabitants as were unable to purchase their Freedom, and who only occupy'd some low and inconsiderable branches of Trade, such as the Retail of Ale, Beer, Milk, Horse-hiring, Cow-feeding, Poultry, and the like, were admitted Stallangers, whereby they were allowed to carry on their small Trade on payment annually of such rates as were imposed on them, in proportion to their Trade and Ability; and that in the present case it is expedient to take trial of such a remedy for a term of five years, from and after Whitsunday next, in manner herein aftermentioned; and that the Laws made against Unfree Traders should be put to punctual Execution against every person who is Unfree, and who shall not be admitted as Stallangers, in manner herein after-specified: Therefore the Lord Provost, Baillies, Council, Deacons of Crafts, Ordinary and Extraordinary, do hereby impower and authorise the Dean of Gild and his Council, and their successors in Office, from and after the term of Whitsunday next, during the aforesaid term of five years, to receive and admit every inhabitant of both sexes as Stallangers, who shall appear to them to be unable to purchase their Freedom, and thereby to give them liberty to deal and Trade in Retail of Ale, Beer, Fish, Milk, Herbs, Roots, Fruit, Cow-feeding, Horse-hiring, Poultry, and suchlike

small Trade, to be settled and specified in their respective Act of Toleration, to be renewed annually upon payment of such a sum as shall be settled by the said Dean of Gild and Council, to be accounted for by the said Dean of Gild for the use of the Town ; which admissions shall be renewed annually, otherwise to become void and null ; and the sums to be severally paid for the said admissions, not to exceed Ten Pound, nor to be under Three Pound. And that the receipts of sums may be regularly brought as a charge upon the Dean of Gild, and his aforesaid for the benefit of the Town ; That all such admissions shall be duly recorded in a Book to be made and kept for that purpose bearing the aforesaid receipt. And the Dean of Gild and his Council and their aforesaid are hereby ordained from and after the said Term of Whitsunday next, to cause execute [*sic*] the laws made against Unfree Traders, against every person of both sexes resident within this City, or within any of its Liberties, who are Unfree, and who shall not purchase their Liberty of being tolerate Stallangers as aforesaid.—Extracted by Geo. Irving.

I shall have occasion again to return to these Craft-Gilds.



CHAPTER XI.

TRADE OR CRAFT GILDS.

UPON the Craft-Gilds, as also sometimes upon the Merchant-Gilds, did the defence of the town devolve. They formed in many cases a portion of the military defence of the town or province. The Gild-statutes of Continental cities especially abound with references to this branch of duty ; and brilliant were some of the victories—as, for instance, the Butchers of Liége at Steppes, in 1213 ; the Flemish Weavers at Courtrai, in 1302 ; the Furriers of Brussels at the siege of Malines, in 1303 ; and the Journeymen Bakers of Munich at Ampfing, in 1322. The Trainbands of the last and present century were perhaps somewhat analogous. The Order of the *Knights Templars* in England, and of the *Knights of the Holy Ghost*

in Scotland, were probably only military or fighting Gilds originally. I shall make some further reference to these. (See *Anglo-Saxon Gilds*, chapters 13 and 14.)

The Craft-Gilds embodied other features common to the Religious and Social Gilds—indeed to all Gilds. Dr. Brentano speaks comprehensively on this point :—

“Besides being brotherhoods for the care of the temporal welfare of their members, the Craft-Gilds were, like the rest of the Gilds, at the same time religious fraternities. In the account of the origin of the Company of Grocers (Herbert, vol. i. pp. 43—45) it is mentioned that, at the very first meeting, they fixed a stipend for the priest, who had to conduct the religious services, and to pray for their dead. In this respect the Craft-Gilds of all countries are alike ; and in reading their statutes, one might fancy sometimes that the old craftsmen cared only for the well-being of their souls. All had particular Saints for patrons, after whom the Society was frequently called ; and, where it was possible, they chose one who had some relation to their trade. They founded masses, altars, and painted windows in cathedrals ; and even at the present day their coats of arms and their gifts range proudly by the side of those of kings and barons. Sometimes individual Craft-Gilds appear to have stood in special relations to a particular church, by virtue of which they had to perform special services, and received in return a special share in all the prayers of the clergy of that church. In later times the Craft-Gilds frequently went in solemn procession to their churches. We find innumerable ordinances also as to the support of the sick and poor ; and to afford a settled asylum for distress, the London Companies early built dwellings near their halls. The chief care, however, of the Gildmen was always directed to the welfare of the souls of the dead. Every year a requiem was sung for all departed Gild-brothers, when they were all mentioned by name ; and on the death of any member, special services were held for his soul, and distribution of alms was made to the poor, who in return had to offer up prayers for the dead, as is still the custom in Roman Catholic countries.” (p. cxxxiv.)

In proof, in the Statute of the Fullers of Lincoln, founded 1297, was the following : “When any of the bretheren or sisteren dies, the

rest shall give a halfpenny each to buy bread to be given to the poor, for the soul's sake of the dead."

It remains but to add that the degeneration of these Craft-Gilds commenced almost simultaneously with their obtaining independence and authority in trade matters in the towns—stimulated by the overbearing character of their internal regulations—and proceeded with increasing rapidity. "In the fifteenth century the capitalist quality of the craftsmen becomes more and more prevalent among the requisites for obtaining membership; and ever more numerous become the restrictions by which they endeavoured to seclude themselves, and thus to make the handicraft the monopolies of a few families. But this was even more the case in the following centuries; and therefore Lord Bacon, speaking of these Gilds, justly describes them as 'fraternities in evil.'" (Brentano, p. cxlix.)

The transformation of the Craft-Gilds into societies of capitalists, exercised of course an influence on their government; and it appears altogether natural when, in the sixteenth century, we see that government entirely transferred into the hands of the richer Gild-members. The Gild-members were at this time divided into three classes—the livery to which the richer masters were admitted; the householders, to which the rest of the masters belonged; and the journeymen belonging to the Gild, who were simply called "freemen," sometimes also "yeomanry" or "bachelors." Instead of the former sovereign meeting of all Gild-associates, there now appeared a "Court of Assistants," who governed the Gild, and enacted its ordinances. The first legal appointment of a Court of Assistants is met with under Philip and Mary (1554-8). After the time of James I., the transfer of the elective franchise from the "*communitas*" to the Courts of the Companies became general in the charters; and in this manner, what had hitherto existed only on sufferance became legal. The King appointed the first members of the Court for life; as these withdrew or died off, the Court itself filled up the number from former masters and wardens. But these it likewise chose from amongst the liverymen. To the rest of the members election-day briefly meant the day on which they assembled in the Gild-hall to hear the names of the elected proclaimed. An oath was also introduced for all members, in which they swore to obey the

Master and Wardens and their ordinances. Refractoriness towards the Gild, violation of its laws, refusal to accept office if elected—these were punished as formerly. The charitable regulations also remained the same as in former times. (Brentano.)

In the modified form last described some of the more important Craft-Gilds have survived to our own time; and these are the only Gilds which have survived through successive ages. More homage is of late being paid to them than has been the case for several centuries.


In a pamphlet by Mr. Gavin Burns, published 1821, it is shown almost conclusively how the Friendly Societies of Scotland had descended from the Trade Gilds.

In Russia Trade-Gilds are very numerous. No man indeed—nobles excepted—can live in Moscow save by gaining a place in one of the recognised Orders of Society—in a Tsek, a Gild, or a Chin. A Tsek is an association of craftsmen and petty traders, such as the Tailoring Tsek, the Cooking Tsek, and the Peddling Tsek; the members of which pay a small sum of money, elect their own elders, and manage their own affairs. The Elder of a Tsek gives to each member a printed form, which must be countersigned by the police not less than once a year. A Gild is a higher kind of Tsek, the members of which pay a tax to the State for the privilege of buying and selling and for immunity from serving in the ranks. A Chin is a grade in the public service; parted somewhat sharply into fourteen stages—from that of a certified collegian up to that of an acting privy councillor. A peasant might enter a Gild if he could pay the tax; but the impost is heavy even for the lowest Gild, and a man who comes into Moscow in search of work, must seek a place in some cheap and humble Tsek. He need not follow the calling of his Tsek—a clerk may belong to a Shoemakers' Tsek, and a gentleman's servant to a Hawkers' Tsek. But in one or other of these societies a peasant must get his name inscribed, and his papers signed, under penalty of being seized by the police, and hustled into the ranks. (Hepworth Dixon's *Free Russia*, 1870, vol. ii. p. 184.)

In these regulations we discern many points of resemblance to the Trade-Gilds of Great Britain, more especially to those of London.

But Russia had also a system of Social Gilds in many respects very closely resembling our own early Gilds ; these Associations are known as Artels. They also are of ancient origin. Mr. Dixon says : " These early Artels had very few articles of association ; and the principal were—that the members formed one body, bound to stand by each other ; that they were to be governed by a chief, elected by general suffrage ; that every man was appointed to his post by the Artel ; that a member could not refuse to do the thing required of him ; that no one shall be suffered to drink, swear, game, and quarrel ; that every one should bear himself towards his comrade like a brother ; that no present should be received unless it were shared by each ; that a member could not name a man to serve in his stead, except with the consent of all. In after times these simple rules were supplemented by provisions for restoring to the member's heirs the value of his rights in the common fund. In case of death these additional rules provided that the subscriber's share should go to his son, if he had a son ; if not, to his next of kin, as any other property would descend. So far the estate was held to be a joint concern as regards the question of use, and a series of personal properties as regards the actual ownership. All these City Artels took the motto of "Honesty and Truth." An Artel, then, was in its origin no other than an association of craftsmen for their mutual support against the miseries of city life, just as the Commune was an association of labourers for mutual support against the miseries of country life. Each sprang in its turn from a sense of weakness of individual men struggling with the hard necessities of time and place.

In the City of Vienna, in 1879, there was a large number of Gilds of the Industrial Order (Craft-Gilds) in operation, as deputations from "over seventy" took part in the processions forming part of the ceremonies on the occasion of the celebration of the Emperor and Empress's silver wedding.



CHAPTER XII

SPECIAL GILDS.

GILDS were sometimes founded in a spirit of thankfulness for special mercies, of which an instance is to be found in that established at Burgh (? Norfolk) before the fourteenth century, and which was so established in fulfilment of a vow made by certain Pilgrims while tempest-tossed at sea. "One thing comes out clearly, that though a Gild might be founded to carry out some special object, as often was the case,—as for the support of a church, the maintenance of an altar, or a play, the ringing of bells, the keeping up of records, or of minstrelsy, or for the encouragement of crafts and trade,—the same general features and the same ideas were common to all; but that these became modified or added to, according to the special need of the Gild." (Introduction to "English Gilds," p. xli.)

It has been asserted that the famous historic Order of *Knights Templars* took its origin in the form of a Gild; this is not altogether improbable; as its original object (in the twelfth century) was the protection of Pilgrims on the roads in Palestine. It was only later that the Order took for its chief object the protection of the Holy Sepulchre as against the Saracens. The rules of the Order, as established by King Baldwin II., involved vows of chastity, obedience, and poverty. The classes of the Order were Knights, Esquires, Servitors, and Chaplains (we quote them in order of our authority). The universal badge of the Order was a girdle of linen thread. The vow of poverty does not seem to have been strictly enforced, for in the thirteenth century the Order was in possession of no less than 9,000 estates, lordships, etc., mostly in France. The Templars, with the rest of the Christians, were driven from Palestine by the Saracens, and finally settled in Cyprus; where their imperious bearing brought them in conflict not only with Pope Clement V., but also with Philip the Fair of France; and these two combined powers caused their dispersion. Those who settled in England appear to have relinquished arms, and to have followed the

profession of the Law. The Hospitallers were probably a branch of the same original order.

The Order of *Freemasons* is sometimes traced back to the Knights Templars, and beyond; it being indeed asserted by some writers that the mysteries of Freemasonry are to be traced from those of the Priests of Eleusis, as these again were derived from ancient Egypt. There has been handed down some account of an ancient Order of Architects and Engineers under the name of the Dionysiacs of Ionia; they monopolised the building of temples, stadia, and theatres, and recognised each other by signs and tokens. A similar Order, or Fraternity of architects and builders, in the middle ages extended over all Catholic countries, and were especially patronised by the See of Rome. It is to this craft that we owe the magnificent Gothic edifices dedicated to Religion, which contrast so strangely with the barbarous efforts of those ages in most other departments of Art. It is difficult to reconcile this supposed original connection between the Craft and the Church, because in later times the Masons were excommunicated on the alleged ground of irreligion. The "Chapters and Congregacons" of the Masons seem to confirm their early association with the Church. These Masons wore a livery; that of those connected with Christ Church, Canterbury, in the early part of the fifteenth century, was of murrey cloth—a sort of red or mulberry colour. (See Carpenter's Gild of Norwich, 1388.)

Mr. Henry Charles Coote, F.S.A., in his paper on Gilds given in vol. iv. of the "Transactions" of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society (1871), speaking in a foot-note (p. 2) of the "Lodges" of Freemasons, says:

"... Originally they were, like other Gilds, distinct communities neither affiliated to, nor dependent upon, any other association of the same craft. At the beginning of the present century (perhaps at the end of the last) through extraneous influences, a hierarchal system was introduced into Freemasonry, and all the independent Lodges (or Gilds) submitted themselves to one Lodge in London, as their chief, at the same time surrendering to the latter their Royal Charters (or licences) and their Ordinances. These were

probably all destroyed by the central authority at the time of the surrender. Copies of the charters, however, will possibly be found at the Record Office amongst the returns made under the 12 Rich. II. (1388), and Mr. Tyssen's discovery shows it to be more than probable that the Rules and Ordinances are registered in some of the Ecclesiastical Courts, where they will be discovered whenever a search shall be made for them."

The *Odd Fellows* claim to be descended directly from the Freemasons; and they certainly seem, by their conviviality and other observances, to inherit something of the old Gild spirit.





THE HISTORY OF GILDS.



PART II.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW.

I PROPOSE to devote this and several following chapters to a chronological review of the progress of Gilds in Great Britain ; and in this manner I hope to present a more connected view of the development and ultimate decadence of Gilds—as also of their modern revival—than can be accomplished by other means. There will be a certain amount of overlapping of periods incident to the arrangement of time adopted by the different authorities quoted.

CHAPTER XIII.

ROMAN PERIOD (B.C. 55 TO A.D. 449).

PIKE, in his “History of Crime”—a work of high authenticity—gives the following account of the Gilds in Great Britain during the Roman occupation :

“In the towns there were bodies known as Colleges, or, as we should now say, Companies or Gilds, which were under the supervision of the Imperial Government, and which had evidently attained a high position before the Romans quitted Britain. Known in the earliest days of Roman history, they survived all changes of political constitution, and seem even to have acquired a political power of their own. The Imperial laws contain numerous provisions for determining the relation of the Gilds to those local Courts [Roman Colo-

nial Courts] which have already been described. It became a common practice to plead membership of a Gild as a ground of exemption from membership of the Court. The validity of this plea was not admitted, and the Gilds-men, if duly qualified, were compelled to serve in the Court, and, perhaps, even to abandon their Gild. But there can be no better proof of the progress made by corporations of various kinds than the fact that their members had the qualification for a seat in an essentially aristocratic Court, and were yet by no means anxious to occupy it.

“As in the case of the local Courts, so in the case of the Roman Gilds, there is sufficient evidence to show that what happened in other provinces happened also in Britain. In various places inscriptions have been found which prove the existence in Britain of those Gilds which are mentioned in the Theodosian Code, some of which were Commercial and others Religious. Nor, indeed, can there be any reasonable doubt that the Roman civilisation flourished at one time in all its splendour, not, perhaps, in the remote West, but from the western hills to the German Ocean, and from Hadrian's Wall to the Channel.”

I think Mr. Coote (already quoted in our chapter on “Special Gilds”) has at once and for ever set at rest the question of the origin of Gilds in Great Britain, as between the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons, in the following manner :

“The [Roman] Colleges remained in this country throughout the Imperial rule, and with the provincial inhabitants survived the Anglo-Saxon occupation of Britain. They were subsequently, through that marvellous imitateness which distinguished the German in the early stages of his national life, adopted by him also.

“That this was the true origin of the English Gild it will not be very difficult to demonstrate. Under the Empire, and before it, private colleges (*collegia privata*) were Corporations composed of men voluntarily bound together for a common lawful purpose. They were established by legal Act, either a *senatus consultum*, or a decree of the Emperor. The numbers of the *sodales* could not be less than three ; it might be any larger number, unless it was restricted by the authority which gave the college existence. In its constitution the

college was divided into *decuriæ* and *centuriæ*—bodies of ten and a hundred men. It was presided over by a *magister* and by *decuriones*—a president and a senate. It had a *quæstor* and *arcarius*—a treasurer and sub-treasurer. It was a corporation, and could hold property as such. It had a common cult and common sacrifices at stated times. It had its priests and temple. It had its *lares* and its *genii*. It had a *curia* (or meeting-house), where the *ordo collegium* (its senators) met to consult and determine. At the same *curia* also the whole sodality met at their general meetings and to feast. There was a common *arca* (or chest) to contain their revenues, their contributions, and their fines. Each college had its archives and its banners. It had *jus sodaliti*, or full power over its members. To each candidate on his admission was administered an oath peculiar to the college. The *sodales* supported their poor brethren. They imposed *tributa* or contributions to meet their current and extraordinary expenses. They buried publicly deceased brethren, all the survivors attending the rite. The common sepulchre or *columbarium* received the brethren. Each college celebrated its natal day, a day called *cara cognationis*, and two other days called severally *dies violarum* and *dies rosæ*. . . . Each college could hold property.”

In reference to some of the later festive days named, Mr. Coote points out that the natal day and the *cara cognationis* were obviously appointed to carry out the general purposes of the college; but for the *dies violarum* and *dies rosæ* there were others purposed. “On these two days of charming nomenclature the *sodales* met at the sepulchres of their departed brethren to commemorate their loss, and to deck their tombs with violets and roses, an offering (if not a sacrifice) pleasing to the spirit of the *manes*.” He adds:

“Of Trade Colleges epigraphy has preserved an infinity of examples; but, as I have intimated, the private colleges were not of craftsmen only; any persons could combine and form a college, if the common purposes of it were lawful. Men could combine themselves into a religious college if the religion was tolerated by the State; and De Rossi has shown that colleges *funerum causâ*, or for the purpose of holding land wherein to bury the *sodales*, were rife in Rome, both before and after the rise of Christianity. In fact, it was the glorious

destiny of this order of colleges, as the creators of the Catacombs, to preserve our nascent and struggling faith. Under cover of a Roman burial club the scheme of man's redemption was carried out."

The wonderful internal identity of these Roman Colleges with the later Gilds will be more fully seen in the detailed examination of the Gild Ordinances which I propose to make in some later chapters.

I do not think that it can any longer be contended that the Gilds in England were of Anglo-Saxon origin. The true theory must be that the Saxons found the Gilds here and shaped them to conformity with their own institutions, and afterwards introduced them into their own country.



CHAPTER XIV.

ANGLO-SAXON GILDS (A.D. 827—1013).

IT is always understood that the Gilds of England were in their greatest excellence during the Anglo-Saxon and late Saxon periods of our history—the former ranging from A.D. 827 to 1013; the latter from A.D. 1041 to 1066—the Danish period (1013-41) intervening.

There was as early as 860-6 a Gild of Cnihts in London, and there is known to have been a similar (or more probably the same) Gild in existence after the Norman Conquest, and so on for several centuries later. There were indeed several degrees of Cnihts—an Earl being a King's Cniht (as he had taken homage to the King); but the Earls themselves had knights; and hence there may have been several degrees of Cnihten Gilds. The Cnihten Gild of London was an institution of importance for many centuries, and had lands. May not the Order of Knights-Templars have sprung from this Gild in the days of the Crusaders?

We have more exact knowledge of the regulations of three Gilds of this period—all dating in the 10th century—viz., one in London, one

in Cambridge, and one in Exeter. We will review them in the order here stated.

London.—This Gild, which is believed to be the earlier of the three, is very remarkable, as being very much in the nature of an Insurance Association. Mr. Thorpe (*Diplomatarium Anglicum*, pref. p. xvii.) refers to its Ordinances as “a Deed of Incorporation by the Prelates and Reeves of the Londoners for the Repression of Theft and Maintenance of the Public Peace.” The Ordinances of themselves state that they contain the constitution of the Gild, which is composed of Thanes and Ceorls [gentlemen and yeomen] under the perpetual presidency of the Bishop and Port-Gerefa of London. It also declares that the regulations are made by common consent of the brethren, in addition to and furtherance of the stringent provisions against robbery contained in the Acts of the Witenagemot therein specified; and for the better comprehension of the object of the Gild, it invokes into the rules the enactments themselves.

1. The object of the Gild was the recovery of stolen stock and slaves, wherever that recovery was practicable; and where that could not be effected, then the indemnification of the loser by *pro rata* contributions of the brethren. Thus it was really an indemnification by way of mutual insurance. The chief regulations for the working of the Gild were as follows:

2. Each of the brethren shall contribute yearly 4d. to the common behoof; the brethren shall pay for the stolen property as soon as the contribution is made. They shall make the search for it in common. Every man who has property to the value of 30d. shall contribute his 1d. The poor widow, who has neither a friend who will contribute on her behalf, nor land of her own, is exempted.

3. The Gild shall be subdivided into bodies of 10 men, one of these 10 being its chief. Further, these bodies of men, or tithings, shall be united into a body of 100 men [or hynden], and over this last-mentioned body shall be appointed an officer, called a hynden man, who shall direct the other ten, to the common benefit of the Gild. These 11 shall hold the money of the hynden, and will decide what they shall disburse when a payment must be made, and what they shall receive when there is anything to receive, and when

money shall be payable to the brethren at their common suit. The brethren are to take notice that there must be forthcoming every contribution which has been ordained to the common behoof, at the rate of 3od., or an ox, so that all may be fulfilled which has been ordained, and which stands in the agreement of the brethren.

4 and 5. These contain directions for commencing and prosecuting the searches after stolen stock.

6. Regulations for payment for stolen property. A horse shall be paid for at the maximum rate of half a pound, if it be so good. If it be inferior, it shall be paid according to its value. An ox shall be compensated for at a mark, a cow at 2od., a hog at 1od., and a sheep at 1s. The money required beyond what shall be in hand shall be raised by a call amongst the brethren.

A theowman (*i.e.*, a slave) shall be compensated for at the maximum rate of half a pound, or according to his value, the money to be raised by a call, as before mentioned. If he has stolen himself [*i.e.*, has run away from his owner], he shall be stoned, and every brother who has a slave shall contribute either 1d. or a halfpenny, according to the number of the brotherhood. If the slave shall make good his escape, he shall be compensated for according to his value.

7. The brethren shall avenge each other's wrongs, and shall be as one in friendship so one in enmity. The brother that shall openly kill a thief shall have a reward of 12s. out of the common fund. The owner of property insured shall continue the search for it until he be paid, and he shall be recouped the expenses of the search out of the common fund.

8. The hyndenmen and those who preside over the tithings shall meet together once in every month, and ascertain what business has been done in the Gild. These 11 men shall also have their dinner together *à discretion*, and shall give away the remains of the dinner, for the love of God. Every brother shall help another, as it is ordained and confirmed by oath. If a sworn brother of the Gild die, each brother shall give a loaf for his soul, and shall sing or procure to be sung 50 psalms within 30 days. Every brother who has lost stock, and intends to claim the amount of his insurance, shall

notify his loss to his neighbours within three days. But the search shall still be proceeded with, for the Gild will only pay for stolen, not unguarded property ; and many men make fraudulent claims.

In the preceding we have followed the reading of Mr. Henry Charles Coote, F.S.A., a competent authority (vide "Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society," vol. iv. pp. 10—12), who adds thereon :

"The regulations and provisions of this Gild command our unqualified respect. They are irrefutable evidence of a high state of civilisation. We have in them a scheme of mutual assurance, with all the appliances for carrying it out, combined with thorough comprehension of the true principles upon which such schemes are founded, and can alone be supported. For the Gild not only satisfies itself that the claim is honest, but repudiates payment of it whenever the claimant has shown himself to have been contributory by his negligence to the loss of which he affects to complain. And, lastly, the Gild, to secure the society against claims of unlimited and overwhelming amount, establishes a maximum rate of compensation."

This must be regarded as an especial adaptation of the Frith-Gild.



CHAPTER XV.

ANGLO-SAXON GILDS (*continued*).

CAMBRIDGE.—Next in antiquity is supposed to rank the Gild of the Thanes of Cambridge. I here fall back upon the learning of Dr. Hickes, who, in his *Thesaurus* (1. Dissert. Epist. 20), gives what he designates the full text of the Ordinances of this Association, which was of the Social Order of Gilds : "In this writing is contained an account of an Institution established by the members of the Society (Gild) of noblemen in *Cambridge* :—

"It is ordained, that all the members shall swear by the Holy Reliques, that they will be faithful to each of their fellow-members, as well in Religious as in worldly matters ; and that (in all disputes) they will always take part with him that has justice on his side.

“When any member shall die, he shall be carried by the whole Society to whatever place of interment he shall have chosen ; and whoever shall not come to assist in bearing him, shall forfeit a sextarium of honey ; the Society making up the rest of the expense, and furnishing each his quota towards the funeral entertainment ; as also two pence for charitable purposes : out of which, as much as is meet and convenient is to be bestowed upon the Church of St. Etheldred.

“When any member shall stand in need of assistance from his fellow-members, notice thereof shall be given to the Reeve or Warden who dwells nearest to that member, unless that member be his immediate neighbour ; and the Warden if he neglect giving relief shall forfeit one pound. In like manner, if the president of the Society shall neglect coming to his assistance he shall forfeit one pound, unless he be detained either by the business of his lord, or by sickness.

“If any one shall take away the life of a member, his reparatory fine shall not exceed eight pounds ; but if he shall obstinately refuse to make reparation, then he shall be prosecuted by and at the expense of the whole Society ; and if any individual undertake the prosecution, then each of the rest shall bear an equal share of the expenses. If, however, a member who is poor kills any one, and compensation must be made, then if the deceased was worth 1,200 shillings, each member of the Society shall contribute half a mark ; but if the deceased was a hind, each member shall contribute two *oræ* ; if a Welshman, only one. If any member shall take away the life of another member, he shall make reparation to the relations of the deceased ; and, besides, make atonement for his fellow-member by a fine of eight pounds, or lose his right of fellowship in the Society. And if any member, excepting only in the presence of the King, or of a Bishop, or Ealderman, shall eat or drink with him that hath taken away the life of his fellow-member, he shall forfeit one pound, unless he can prove by the evidence of two witnesses upon oath that he did not know the person.

“If any member shall treat another member in an abusive manner, or call him names, he shall forfeit a sextarium of honey ; and if he

shall be abusive to any other person that is not a member, he shall also forfeit a sextarium of honey, unless he can clear himself upon the evidence of two witnesses upon oath.

"If any knight (*i.e.*, servant at arms) shall draw his sword, his lord shall forfeit one pound, which he may by every possible means recover from the offender, and which the whole Society shall assist him in the recovery of. And if one knight shall wound another, the wounded person's lord, in concert with the whole Society, shall avenge the wrong, and prosecute the offender to death.

"A knight, for way-laying any man, shall forfeit a sextarium of honey; and if he set any trap or snare for him, the penalty shall be the same.

"If any member, being at a distance from home, shall die or fall sick, his fellow-members shall send to fetch him, and convey him, either alive or dead, to whatever place he may have wished, or be liable to the stated penalty. But if any member shall die at home, every member who shall not go to fetch his corpse, and every member who shall absent himself from his obsequies, shall forfeit a sextarium of honey."

The "pound" mentioned in the preceding was a pound weight of silver, now coined into £2 16s. 3d. stg. A "mark" was two-thirds of the Saxon pound, or about £1 17s. 9d. of present money. The "ora" was the eighth part of a mark, or about 4s. 8d. of present money. The Saxon "penny" was the twentieth part of an ora. The "honey" was probably used for metheglin—the customary drink at the feasts. The "prosecutions" were very probably carried on by *force and arms*.

Exeter.—The Gild at this date existing in this City was of the Religious type. I again fall back upon Dr. Hickes (*Thesaurus*, 1. Dissert. Epist. 20). He gives us what *in extenso* purports to be the record of regulations made at a meeting "held in the City of *Exeter*, for the sake of God and our souls, that we may make such ordinances as tend to our welfare and security, as well in this life as in that future state which we wish to enjoy in the presence of God, our Judge. Being, therefore, here assembled together, we have decreed:—

"That three stated meetings shall be held every year: the first on

the Festival of St. Michael the Archangel; the second on the Festival of St. Mary, next following the Winter Solstice; and the third on the Festival of All Saints, which is celebrated after Easter.

“That at each meeting every member shall contribute two sextaria of barley-meal, and every knight one, together with his quota of honey.

“That at each of these meetings a priest shall sing two masses; the one for living, and the other for departed members. Every lay brother shall likewise sing two psalms; the one for living and the other for departed members. Everyone shall, moreover, in his turn procure six masses and six psalms to be sung at his own proper expense.

“That when any member is about to go abroad, each of his fellow-members shall contribute five pence; *and if any member's house shall have been burned, one penny.*

“That if anyone shall neglect the stated times of meeting: for the first neglect he shall be at the expense of three masses; for the second, five; and if after being warned of the consequence he shall absent himself a third time, he shall not be excused, unless he has been hindered either by sickness or by the business of his lord.

“That if anyone should by chance neglect the stated time of meeting, his quota of regular contribution shall be doubled.

“That if any member shall treat another member in an abusive manner, his reparatory fine shall be thirty pence.

“And finally, we beseech every member, for God's sake, to observe these things which are ordained in this Society, in everything as we have ordained them. And may God help us to observe them.”

The text of these two Gilds' Ordinances is given in more literal form in Kemble's “Saxons in England,” Appendix D, vol. i.

856 (Reign of Ethelwolph), a Gild was founded in the City of Winchester. Milner in his History of that city (2 vols., 1809) says: “It was in the latter end of this reign, viz., in the year 856, that its trade and commerce flourished exceedingly; our principal citizens formed themselves, under the Royal protection, into a Society called a *Guild*, being the first association of this nature, by the space of a whole century, recorded in history.” Here, as is seen from the

preceding chapters, the learned author was under a misapprehension. In 1102 the *Guildhall* of this city was destroyed by fire.

Dr. Brentano points out that an already far-advanced development of the Gilds was shown by the "*Judicia Civitatis Lundoniæ*," the Statutes of the London Gilds, which were reduced to writing in the time of King Athelstan (A.D. 925—41). From these the Gilds in and about London appear to have united into *one* Gild, and to have framed common regulations for the better maintenance of peace, for the suppression of violence—especially of theft and the aggressions of the powerful families—as well as for carrying out rigidly the ordinances enacted by the King for that purpose. Particularly comprehensive were the arrangements for prosecution against theft: *one might call these Gilds assurance companies against theft*. Not only were the members obliged to pursue and track out the thief, even in other districts, but the injured person also received compensation for his loss from the common fund. The agreements which had been come to, and the obligation resulting therefrom, bound not only the members of the Gilds, but also all non-members living in the district in which the Gilds existed; and the non-members were for this purpose united into tithings under the lead of the Gild-brothers. Every month the members of the Gild assembled at a banquet, at which the common interests, the observance of the Ordinances enacted, and similar matters, were inquired into and discussed. (English Gilds, p. 75).

Green, in his "Short History of the English People," speaks disparagingly of the influence of the Trade Gilds of this period, thus: "Town and country were alike crushed by heavy taxation, while industry was checked by a *system of Trade Gilds which confined each occupation to an hereditary caste*" (p. 5. See 1272-1307.)

CHAPTER XVI.

DANISH PERIOD [A.D. 1013—41].

THE next perfect record of a Gild Ordinance which we find authenticated is that of the Gild of Abbotsbury (Dorset), founded in the reign of Canute (the Dane), about 1030, by Orcy [Orcius], a friend and minister of the King. Its objects were Religion and Charity. We give the text as contained in Kemble's "*Saxons in England*" (2nd ed. p. 511), as follows:—

"This writing witnesseth that Orcy hath granted the Gildhall at Abbotsbury and the site thereof to the honour of God and St. Peter, and for a property to the Gild, both during his life, and after his life, for a long lasting commemoration of himself and his consort. Let him that would set it aside, answer it to God in the great day of judgment!

"Now these are the covenants which Orcy and the Gildsmen of Abbotsbury have ordained to the honour of God, the worship of St. Peter, and the heale of their own souls. Firstly, three days before St. Peter's mass, from each Gild-brother one penny—or one pennyworth of wax—look which the minister most needeth; and on the mass eve, from every two Gild-brothers one broad loaf, well sifted and well raised, towards our common alms; and five weeks before Peter's mass let each Gild-brother contribute one Gild-sester full of clean wheat, and let this be paid within two days, on forfeit of the entrance, which is three sesters of wheat. And let the wood be paid within three days after the corn contribution, from every full Gild-brother one load of wood, and from those who are not full brothers two; or let him pay one Gild-sester of corn. And let him that undertaketh a charge and performeth it not accordingly, be mulcted in the amount of his entrance; and there be no remission. And if one brother misgreet another within the Gild, in hostile temper, let him atone for it to all the fellowship with the amount of his entrance; and after that to him whom he misgreeted, as they two may arrange: and if he will not bend to compensation, let him

lose our fellowship, and every other advantage of the Gild. And let him that introduceth more guests than he ought, without leave of the steward and the caterers, forfeit his entrance. And if any of our fellowship shall pass away from us, let each brother contribute a penny over the corpse for the soul's hele, or pay . . . [original record defaced] . . . brother: and if any one of us should be afflicted with sickness within sixty . . . [ditto] . . . we are to find fifteen men who shall fetch him, and if he be dead thirty, they shall bring him to the place where he desired to go while he lived. And if he die in this present place, let the steward have warning to what place the corpse is to go; and let the steward warn the brethren, the greatest number that he can ride or send to, that they shall come thither and worthily accompany the corpse, and bear it to the minister, and earnestly pray there for the soul. It is rightly ordained a Gildship if we do thus, and well fitting it is both toward God and man: for we know not which of us shall first depart.

“Now we have faith, through God's assistance, that the aforesaid ordinance, if we rightly maintain it, shall be to the benefit of us all. Let us earnestly from the bottom of our hearts beseech Almighty God to have mercy upon us, and also His holy apostle St. Peter to make intercession for us, and take our way unto eternal rest, because for his sake we gathered this Gild together: he hath the power in heaven to admit into heaven whomso he will, and to exclude whomso he will not, even as Christ Himself spake unto him in the Gospel: ‘Peter, I give to thee the keys of heaven, and whatsoever thou wilt have bound on earth, the same shall be unbound in heaven.’ Let us have hope and trust in him, that he will guide us here in this world, and after death be a help to our souls. May he bring us to eternal rest! Amen!”

All this indicates a familiarity with Gild-practice in the past; and also indicates the manner in which many of the Religious Gilds of that period may have been founded.

It is believed by those who have investigated the history of Gilds carefully, that these had probably been transplanted from England to Denmark by King Canute about the middle of the

eleventh century. They soon became placed under the special patronage of the three Royal Saints of the land—St. Canute the King, St. Canute the Duke, and St. Erich the King, and were called, after them, St. Canute's and St. Erich's Gilds. "From that time the Government got up relations with them, and favoured them as associations for the maintenance of law, security, and order." Many superficial writers have supposed that because Gilds were found prevailing in Denmark and the North of Europe generally at a very early period, and because the Northmen were known to have overrun our country on various occasions about this date, that therefore we in England had derived our Gilds from the North of Europe through our Anglo-Saxon progenitors, the facts being almost conclusively shown to be the other way. On the other hand, the assertion of Dr. Brentano, that England is the birthplace and cradle of the Gilds, can no longer be maintained on any ground. (See Chapter xii.)



CHAPTER XVII.

NORMAN PERIOD [A.D. 1066—1154].

AFTER the Conquest, Gilds continued to be established for the express promotion of religion, charity, and trade; and we have it on the authority of Dugdale, that it is from these fraternities that the various companies and city corporations in Great Britain have been derived. Much concerning these has already been said under "Town or Corporation Gilds."

In the Domesday Book mention is made of a Gild of Clerks at Canterbury, possessed of considerable house property. Indeed, it was only the possession of houses and land that could bring them within the purview of that Survey. Unfortunately the City of London was not embraced in that great record, or we should have had the means of knowing more concerning the Gild-Merchants, and other Gilds of the City. Soon after the Norman Conquest we

know that there were numbers of Gilds in existence in London, and that their constitutions were based on the Saxon model.

1071—1127. — Green speaks very favourably of the influence of the Gilds during this period, which he terms the “English revival :”—

“In the silent growth and elevation of the English people the boroughs led the way; unnoticed and despised by prelate and nobles they had alone preserved the full tradition of Teutonic liberty. The rights of self-government, of free speech in free meeting, of equal justice by one’s equals, were brought safe across the ages of Norman tyranny by the traders and shopkeepers of the towns. In the quiet, quaintly named streets, in Town-mead and Market-place, in the Lord’s mill beside the stream, in the bell that swung out its summons to the crowded borough-mote, in the jealousies of craftsmen and Guilds, lay the real life of Englishmen, the life of their home and trade, their ceaseless sober struggle with oppression, their steady, unwearied battle for self-government. It is difficult to trace the steps by which borough after borough won its freedom. The bulk of them were situate in the Royal demesne, and, like other tenants, their customary rents were collected and justice administered by a Royal officer. Amongst our towns London stood chief, and charters which Henry [I.] granted it became the model of the rest. The King yielded the citizens the right of justice; every townsman could claim to be tried by his fellow-townsmen in the town courts or hustings, whose sessions took place every week. They were subject only to the old English custom of trial by oath, and exempt from trial by battle, which the Normans had introduced. Their trade was protected from toll or exaction over the length and breadth of the land. The King, however, still nominated, in London as elsewhere, the Portreeve or magistrate of the town, nor were citizens as yet united together in a commune or corporation; but an imperfect civic organisation existed in the “wards” or quarters of the town, each governed by its own alderman, and in the “Gilds” or voluntary associations of merchants or traders, which insured order and mutual protection for their members . . . (p. 89).”

This influence of the Gilds in the direction of independence and

order became a growing one. Many Trade-Gilds were founded during this period. (*Green*, p. 93.)

Hallam in his "Middle Ages" (vol. ii. p. 156-7), gives the following view of the transition of the Gilds at this period :—

In the Saxon period we find voluntary associations, sometimes religious, sometimes secular ; in some cases for mutual defence against injury, in others for mutual relief in poverty. These were called Gilds, from the Saxon verb *gildan*, to pay or contribute ; and exhibited the natural, if not the legal, character of corporations. At the time of the Conquest, as has been mentioned above, such voluntary incorporations of the burgesses possessed in some towns either landed property of their own, or rights of superiority over that of others. An internal elective government seems to have been required for the administration of a common revenue, and of other business incident to their association. They became more numerous, and more peculiarly commercial after that era, as well from the increase of trade as through imitation of similar fraternities existing in many towns of France. The spirit of monopoly gave strength to those institutions ; each class of traders formed itself into a body, in order to exclude competition. Thus were established the Companies in corporate towns : that of the weavers in London being perhaps the earliest ; and these were successively consolidated and sanctioned by charters from the Crown. In towns not large enough to admit of distinct Companies, one Merchant Gild comprehended the traders in general, or the chief of them ; and this from the reign of Henry II. downwards became the subject of incorporating charters. The management of their internal concerns, previously to any incorporation, fell naturally enough into a sort of oligarchy, which the tenor of the charter generally preserved. Though the immunities might be very extensive, the powers were more or less restrained to a small number. Except in a few places, the right of choosing magistrates was first given by King John ; and certainly must rather be ascribed to his poverty, than to any enlarged policy, of which he was utterly incapable.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW. [A.D. 1179—80.]

ABOUT this date there were founded in London several Bridge-Gilds (*Gilda de Ponte*). It is most probable that these were composed of the masons engaged in the construction of the new stone bridge then recently begun; and they appear to have been located in the neighbourhood of the bridge. Some question afterwards arose as to these being formed without lawful authority, and they were fined in various penalties. It may have been that the workmen composing these were not free of the City of London, and hence they were fined, or that they were composed of foreign workmen. Madox, in his "History of the Exchequer" (chap. xiv. sect. xv. p. 390), enumerates four of such Gilds.

1266.—In Florence, we see very distinctly the operation of Trade-Gilds (*Arti*) in the functions of government. From at least early in this century, probably from the time of the city becoming an independent Republic, about 1198, it appears to have been the basis of Florentine polity to divide the citizens exercising commerce into their several Companies or Arts, *i.e.*, Gilds. These were at first twelve, seven called the greater arts, and five lesser; but the latter were gradually increased to fourteen. The seven greater arts were those of lawyers and notaries; of dealers in foreign cloth, called sometimes Calimala; of bankers or money-changers; of woollen drapers; of physicians and druggists; of dealers in silk; and of furriers. The inferior arts were those of retailers of cloth, butchers, smiths, shoemakers, and builders. This division of the traders into classes or Gilds, which had probably been optional before, was this year (1266) made a part of the constitutional government of the city. Each of the seven greater arts had now a council of its own; a chief magistrate or consul, who administered justice in civil causes to all members of his Company, and a banneret (*gonfaloniere*) or military officer, to whose standard

they repaired, when any attempt was made to disturb the peace of the city. (See Hallam's "Middle Ages," chap. iii. p. 2.) In 1297 Dante became a member of the Company of Physicians and Apothecaries in this city (the *sesta* of the *arti maggiori*), to enable him under the then laws to take office under the Government.

1272—1307.—Edward I. adopted the policy of building up the power of the towns, in view of checking the lawless tendencies of the Barons. He greatly, and purposely, encouraged the formation of "Trade-Gilds." Green gives us the following picture of town life as it was then commencing to be, and out of this the growth of Frith and other Gilds:—

. . . "The bell which swung out from the town tower gathered the burgesses to a common meeting, where they could exercise rights of free speech and free deliberation on their own affairs. Their Merchant-Gild, over its ale-feast, regulated trade, distributed the sums due from the town among the different burgesses, looked to the due repair of gate and wall, and acted in fact pretty much the same part as a Town Council of to-day. Not only were all these rights secured by custom from the first, but they were constantly widening as time went on. Whenever we get a glimpse of the inner history of an English town, we find the same peaceful revolution in progress, services disappearing through disuse or omission, while privileges and immunities were being purchased in hard cash. The Lord of the town, whether he were King, Baron, or Abbot, was commonly thriftless or poor, and the capture of a noble, or the campaign of a sovereign, or the building of some new minster by a prior, brought about an appeal to the thrifty burghers, who were ready to fill again their master's treasury, at the price of a strip of parchment, which gave them freedom of trade, of justice, and of government. . . For the most part the liberties of our towns were bought in this way, by sheer hard bargaining. The earliest English charters, save that of London, date from the years when the Treasury of Henry I. was drained by his Norman wars. . . .

. . . "Land was from the first the test of freedom, and the possession of land was what constituted the townsman. . . . In England the 'landless' had no civic, as he had no national existence; the town

was simply an association of the landed proprietors within its bounds. . . . The constitution of the English town, however different its form may have afterwards become, was at the first simply that of the people at large. We have before seen that among the German races society rested on the basis of the family, that it was the family who fought and settled side by side, and the kinsfolk who were bound together in the ties of mutual responsibility to each other and to the law. As society became more complex and less stationary, it necessarily outgrew these simple ties of blood, and in England this dissolution of the family bond seems to have taken place at the very time when Danish incursions and the growth of a feudal temper among the nobles rendered an isolated existence most perilous for the freeman. His only resource was to seek protection among his fellow-freemen, and to replace the older brotherhood of the kinsfolk by a voluntary association of his neighbours for the same purposes of order and self-defence. The tendency to unite in such 'Frith-Gilds,' or Peace-clubs, became general throughout Europe during the 9th and 10th centuries, but on the Continent it was roughly met and repressed. The successors of Charles the Great enacted penalties of scourging, nose-slitting, and banishment against voluntary unions, and even a league of the poor peasants of Gaul against the inroads of the Northmen was suppressed by the swords of the Frankish nobles. In England the attitude of the kings was utterly different. The system of 'Frank-pledge,' or free engagement of neighbour for neighbour, was accepted after the Danish wars as the base of social order. Alfred recognised the common responsibility of the member of the 'Frith-Gild' side by side with that of the kinsfolk; and Athelstan accepted 'Frith-Gilds' as the constituent element of borough life in the Doms of London." (*Short History of the English People.*)

He proceeds to point out that the Frith-Gild of the earlier English town was precisely similar to the Frith-Gilds which formed the basis of social order in the country at large; and he gives a terse but true outline of their operation: an oath of mutual fidelity among its members was substituted for the tie of blood, while the Gild-feast, held once a month in the common hall, replaced the gathering of the kinsfolk round their family hearth. But within this new family

the aim of the Frith-Gild was to establish a mutual responsibility as close as that of the old. "Let all share the same lot" ran its law: "if any misdo, let all bear it." Its member could look for aid from his Gild-brothers in atoning for any guilt incurred by mishap. He could call on them for assistance in case of violence or wrong; if falsely accused, they appeared in court as his compurgators; if poor, they supported, and when dead they buried him. On the other hand, he was responsible to them, as they were to the State, for order and obedience to the laws. A wrong of brother against brother was also a wrong against the general body of the Gild, and was punished by fine, or in the last resort by expulsion, which left the offender a lawless man and an outcast. The one difference between these Gilds in country and town was that, in the latter case, from their close neighbourhood, they tended inevitably to coalesce. Under Athelstan the London Gilds united into one for the purpose of carrying out more effectually their common aims; and at a later time the Gilds of Berwick did the same.

This process of the fusion of the Frith-Gilds—out of which originated the Corporate Gilds—was a long and difficult one; for the brotherhoods naturally differed much in social rank; and even after the union was effected, we see traces of the separate existence, to a certain extent, of some one or more of the wealthier or more aristocratic Gilds. "In London (continues Mr. Green) the Knighten-Gild, which seems to have stood at the head of its fellows, retained for a long time its separate property, while its Alderman—as the chief officer of each Gild was called—became the Alderman of the united Gild of the whole city. In Canterbury we find a similar Gild of Thanes, from which the chief officers of the town seem commonly to have been selected. Imperfect, however, as the union might be, when once it was effected, the town passed from a mere collection of brotherhoods into a powerful and organised community, whose character was inevitably determined by the circumstances of its origin. In their beginnings our boroughs seem to have been mainly gatherings of persons engaged in agricultural pursuits; the first Dooms of London provide especially for the recovery of cattle belonging to the citizens. But as the increasing security of the

country invited the farmer to settle apart in his fields, and the growth of estate and trade told upon the towns themselves, the difference between town and country became more sharply defined. London, of course, took the lead in this new development of civic life."

We are further reminded that even in Athelstan's day every London merchant who had made three long voyages on his own account ranked as a Thane. The Shippers-Gild, or rather the "lithsmen" of this Gild, were of sufficient importance under Harthacnut to figure in the election of a king. At the period of the Norman Conquest the commercial tendency of the towns had become very general. The name at this last period given to the united brotherhood was no longer that of the "Town-Gild," but of the "Merchant-Gild." At a later date the Merchant-Gilds underwent another development, on which we shall remark in Part III.

The social change in the character of the townspeople necessarily produced important results in the character of their municipal institutions. In becoming a Merchant-Gild the body of citizens who formed the "town" enlarged their powers of civic legislation by applying them to the control of their internal trade. It became their special business to obtain from the Crown, or from their Lords, wider commercial privileges—rights of coinage, grants of fairs, and exemption from tolls; while within the town itself they framed regulations as to the sale and quality of goods, the control of markets, and the recovery of debts. A yet more important result sprang from the increase of population which the growth of wealth and industry brought with it. The mass of the new settlers, composed as they were of escaped serfs, of traders without landed holdings, of families who had lost their original lot in the borough, and generally, of the artisans and the poor, had no part in the actual life of the town. The right of trade and the regulations of trade, in common with all other forms of jurisdiction, lay wholly in the hands of the landed burghers already described. By a natural process, too, their superiority in wealth produced a fresh division between the "burghers" of the Merchant-Gild and the unenfranchised mass around them. The former gradually concentrated themselves on the greater operations of commerce, on trades which required a larger

capital, while the meaner employments of general traffic were abandoned to their poorer neighbours. This advance is marked at the period of which we are now principally writing—although the survey naturally extends over earlier and later periods—by such severances as the cloth-merchant from the tailor, or the leather-merchant from the butcher ; and this severance was all-important in its influence upon the constitution of our towns. The members of the trades thus abandoned by the wealthier burghers formed themselves into Craft-Gilds, “which soon rose into dangerous rivalry with the original Merchant-Gild of the town.” A seven years’ apprenticeship formed the necessary prelude to full membership of any Trade-Gild. We learn from Green the following supplemental particulars regarding the Craft-Gilds :—

“Their regulations were of the minutest character ; the quality and value of the work was rigidly prescribed, the hours of toil fixed “from daybreak to curfew,” and strict provisions made against competition in labour. At each meeting of these Gilds their members gathered round the Craft-box, which contained the rules of the Society, and stood with bared heads as it was opened. The Warden and a quorum of Gild-brothers formed a Court, which enforced the ordinances of the Gild, inspected all work done by its members, or confiscated unlawful tools or unworthy goods ; and disobedience to their orders was punished by fines, or, in the last resort, by expulsion, which involved the loss of right to trade. A common fund was raised by contributions among the members, which not only provided for the trade objects of the Gild, but sufficed to found chantries and masses, and erect painted windows in the church of their patron saint. Even at the present day the arms of the Craft-Gild may often be seen blazoned in cathedrals side by side with those of prelates and of kings. But it was only by slow degrees that they rose to such eminence as this. The first steps in their existence were the most difficult ; for to enable a Trade-Gild to carry out its objects with any success, it was necessary, first, that the whole body of craftsmen belonging to the trade should be compelled to belong to it ; and, secondly, that a legal control over the trade itself should be secured to it. A Royal Charter was indispensable for these pur-

poses, and over the grant of these charters took place the first struggle with the Merchant-Gild, which had till then solely exercised jurisdiction over trade within the boroughs. The Weavers, who were the first to secure Royal sanction in the reign of Henry I., were still engaged in the contest for existence as late as the reign of John, when the citizens of London bought for a time the suppression of their Gild. Even under the House of Lancaster, Exeter was engaged in resisting the establishment of a Tailors-Gild. From the 11th century, however, the spread of these Societies went steadily on, and the control of trade passed from the Merchant-Gilds to the new Craft-Gilds." (p. 193.)



CHAPTER XIX.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW—(*continued*).

IN the struggle described at the close of the last chapter other things were involved than those we have immediately in view: the contention of the "greater folk" against the "lesser folk," or of the "commune"—the general mass of the inhabitants—against the "prudhommes" or "wiser few," brought about, as it passed from the regulation of trade to the general government of the town, the great civic revolution of the 13th and 14th centuries. On the Continent of Europe, and especially along the Rhine, the struggle was as fierce as the supremacy of the old burghers had been complete. It reduced to all but serfage the craftsmen. In England the contest had been restrained by the general tenor of the law into a milder form. In London it lasted longer, and was more bitter, than elsewhere. Nowhere had the territorial constitution struck root so deeply, and nowhere had the landed oligarchy risen to such a height of wealth and influence. The City was divided into Wards, each of which was governed by an Alderman drawn from the ruling class. The "Magnates" or "Barons" of the Merchant-Gild advised alone on all matters of civic government, or trade regulations, and distributed or

assessed at their will the revenues or burthens of the town. This led to much discontent; and indeed to open rupture, in which William of the Long-Beard, himself one of the governing body, was slain. One further passage from Green completes this most instructive picture :—

“ No further movement in fact took place until the outbreak of the Barons' Wars, but the City had all through the interval been seething with discontent. The unenfranchised craftsmen, under pretext of preserving the peace, had united in secret Frith-Gilds of their own; and mobs arose from time to time to sack the houses of foreigners and the wealthier burghers. But it was not till the civil war began that the open contest recommenced. The craftsmen forced their way into the town-mote [meeting], and setting aside the Aldermen and magnates, chose [1261] Thomas-Fitz-Thomas for their Mayor. Although dissension still reigned during the reign of the Second Edward, we may regard this election as marking the final victory of the Craft-Gilds. Under his successor all contest seems to have ceased: charters had been granted to every trade; their ordinances fully recognised and enrolled in the Mayor's Court; and distinctive liveries assumed, to which they owed the name of 'Livery Companies'—which they still retain. The wealthier citizens, who found their old power broken, regained influence by enrolling themselves as members of the Trade-Gilds, and Edward III. himself honoured the current of civic feeling by becoming a member of the Gild of Armourers. This event marks the time when the government of our towns had become more really popular than it ever again became till the Municipal Reform Act of our own days. It had passed from the hands of an oligarchy into those of the middle classes, and there was nothing as yet to foretell the reactionary revolution by which the Trade-Gilds themselves became an oligarchy as narrow as that which they had deposed.” (p. 195.)

1349.—The Labour Laws of this and the following years (23 Edward III. c. 3; and 25 Edward III. stat. 2) have been held by several writers to be the result of the action of the Gilds; in some instances direct, in others as indirect—as that the masters had to call in the aid of legislation to repress the evil influences of the Gilds.

Dr. Brentano proves almost conclusively that these laws were due to the convulsions in the labour market produced by the Black-Death visitation of 1348; and in that connection we shall notice the events of this period in more detail. (See 1389.)

1363.—At this period many laws were passed against the practices of forestalling and engrossing, which practices it was supposed tended to enhance the price of various articles of food—instead of being, as modern economists assert, the very reverse. The 37 Edward III.—a statute concerning diet and apparel—recited and enacted as follows :—

“V. ITEM.—For the great mischiefs that have happened as well as to the king as to the great men and commons, of that that the merchants, called grocers, do engross all manner of merchandise vendible; and suddenly do enhance the price of such merchandise within the realm, putting to sale by covin and ordinance made betwixt them, called the Fraternity and Gild of Merchants, the merchandise which be most dear, and keep in store the other, till the time that dearth or scarcity be of the same: it is ordained that no English merchant shall use no ware nor merchandise by him nor by other, nor by no manner of covin, but only one, which he shall choose betwixt this and the Feast of Candlemas next ensuing.”

This most short-sighted measure—which indeed was founded upon a petition presented to the King the preceding year—was repealed in the very next session.

Under “Town Gilds” I have already given much detail regarding the constitutional changes in the London Gilds during the reign of Edward III. (1327—77).

1388.—In this year (12 Richard II.) two Parliaments were held. The second of these, held at Cambridge, enacted various measures touching the condition of labourers, and regulating beggars and common nuisances. In this Parliament it was ordered that two writs should be sent to every Sheriff of England, commanding him to make public proclamation throughout the shire, the first calling upon “the Masters and Wardens of all Gilds and Brotherhoods” to send up to the King’s Council in Chancery returns of all details as to the foundation, statutes, and property of their Gilds; the second calling

on the "Masters and Wardens and Overlookers of all the Mysteries and Crafts" to send up in the same way copies of their Charters or Letters Patent, where they had any. These writs were sent out on the 13th November this year, and the returns were ordered to be sent before the 2nd February following. These returns, made now nearly five centuries ago—some of them mark their date as forty years after the "great pestilence" (of 1348)—are to the number of about 500 still preserved in our national Record Office (discovered by the late Mr. Toulmin Smith, not many years since), and from the information they convey many of the details which follow will be—as some of those which precede have been—drawn.

I propose to give in later chapters an abstract of certain of the returns made in conformity with the foregoing writ arranged alphabetically in counties and towns; keeping in mind that completeness has not been so much the object as comprehensiveness. The object is to illustrate the nature of the Gilds prevailing in different parts of the kingdom. The County of Norfolk is made an exception—here all the Gilds making returns are enumerated. These returns were made in English—the English of the period, and of which we have given various examples. In most other cases they were given either in Latin or Norman-French. The leading features of each Gild are stated, and more especial features are indicated in italics. The dates of the foundation of the several Gilds are stated where these could be ascertained. (See Part III.)

It was during the 14th century that the civil strife between the wealthy classes—the Patricians—and the manufacturing traders, *i.e.*, the Craftsmen, raged with almost relentless fury in many parts of Europe. Thus at Magdeburg, in 1301, ten Aldermen of the Craft-Gilds were burned alive in the market-place. After the Cologne weavers had in 1371 lost the "weavers' battle" against the ruling families, thirty-three weavers were executed, November 21; on the day after, also, houses, churches, and monasteries were searched; all who were found were murdered; lastly, 1,800 of them were exiled, with their wives and children; and their hall, "a palace," was demolished. The exiled found a reception in Aix-la-Chapelle, where they helped considerably to raise their trade. Further examples might readily

be enumerated. (Note by Brentano, "Preliminary Essay," 1870, p. cxi.)

1389.—This year there was enacted the 13 Richard II. Stat. I. c. 8, whereby the Statute of Labourers of the preceding year was confirmed, and it was made clear that the fixing of the prices of labour at this juncture (as also in 1349) had no reference to the action of the Gilds, but really had in view the scarcity of labour and high price of food. The preamble of the Statute of this year says:—

" But forasmuch as a man cannot put the price of corn and other victuals in certain, it is accorded and assented, that the Justices of the Peace in every county in two of their Sessions to be holden betwixt the feast of Easter and St. Michael, shall make proclamation by their discretion according to the dearth of victuals, how much every Mason, Carpenter, Tiler, and other Craftsmen, Workmen, and other Labourers by the day, as well in harvest as in other times of the year, after their degree, shall take by the day, with meat and drink or without meat and drink, between the two Sessions before said, notwithstanding the Statute thereof heretofore made, and that every man obey to such proclamation from time to time as a thing done by Statute."

Pike offers the following remarks upon the Gilds of the 14th and 15th centuries:—

" Not the least curious feature in the history of our towns during this period (1348—1485) is the persistence of the Gild Social or Religious in its old form and in full vitality, while the Craft-Gild, though still existing, was losing its original character, and showing signs of old age. Reference has already been made to the Ordinances of various Gilds returned to Parliament in the year 1388. Later records show not only that the Social or Religious Gilds continued to be an important element in town life, but that they were sufficiently popular to obtain new endowments and a new constitution as late as the latter half of the 15th century. Though there was much in their traditions which was evil, there was much in their practice which was good. They are a connecting link between that spirit of partizanship, with all the attendant lawlessness, which prevailed before the Conquest, and those associations for mutual aid

and charity which are the pride of the 19th century. Of the ill which they did enough has already been said ; it is but fair to say a little of the benefits which they conferred, at any rate in later times.



CHAPTER XX.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW (*continued*).

DURING the fifteenth century, although probably not confined to it, we have evidence of the process of enrolling the Gilds in the Commissary Courts. May this not have been in consequence of the Act of 1436-7, already cited? Mr. Henry Charles Coote, F.S.A. (a competent authority), is of opinion that "this Registration was not ministerial only, but that in each case there was either expressly or by implication a preliminary confirmation of the Rules by ecclesiastical authority. In other words, the Rules were certified, to use a term of our own time, which is exactly applicable." When we come to consider the object of such enrolment in these Courts, we have to remember that at this date in our history the country was ruled very much by ecclesiastics, and the Canon Law ; and in all cases of the infraction of an oath, or solemn promise to pay, the Ecclesiastical Court could enforce performance. Here, then, is probably the explanation of the Commissary Courts being selected for the purposes of enrolment. The rules themselves imply that the object and intention of this confirmation and registration was to facilitate the suing in the Ecclesiastical Court for the quarterages and penalties contained in them. Thus, in the Glovers' Gild is the following :—

"Also it is ordeyned that if any brother of the same fraternitie of the crafte of glovers be behynde of paiement of his quarterage by a yere and a day, and his power the same quarterage to paie, and if he that do maliciously refuse, that thenne he be somened tofore the official [*i.e.* the official of the Consistory of London], and by the

Wardens for his trespass and rebelness of such manner, duly for to be chastised or ponyssed, and to paie the fine aforesaid, and her [*i.e.* their] costs of the Court, as in here [their] account tofore all other bretheren of the same craft wellen answer."

The Rules of the Shearmen [Cloth-workers] Gild provide that if a brother "breke his othe he shall be punysshed by the lawe of our moder holy chirche," and "that the said wardens do make certification unto the officers of the Bishop of London . . . to the intent that they by the laws spiritual compel the said person so being rebel and disobedient for to pay and satisfy the said fine."

And the Rules of the brotherhood of St. Katherine in the same strain provide that "the names of all persons, transgressors and rebels, being bretheren of the fraternity, be presented unto the judge ordinary of the Lord Bishop of London."

1425.—I have, in the chapter on Special Gilds, spoken of the supposed Gild origin of Freemasonry. This association was more particularly traced in the Craft-Gilds. By 3 Henry VI. c. 1, it was enacted as follows:—

"Whereas by the yearly congregations and confederacies made by the Masons in their general chapters [and assemblies] the good course and effect of the Statutes of Labourers be openly violated and broken, in subversion of the law and to the great damage of all the commons: Our said Lord the King, willing in this case to provide remedy, the advice and assent aforesaid, and at the special request of the said Commons, hath ordained and established, that such chapters and congregations shall not be hereafter holden; and if any such be made, they that cause such chapters and congregations to be assembled and holden, if they thereof be convict, shall be judged for felons; and that all the other masons that come to such chapters and congregations be punished by imprisonment of their bodies, and make fine and ransom at the King's will."

1434.—The Emperor Sigismund (of Germany), in his "Secular Reformation," complains that membership in the Gilds had now to be "grossly bought;" that in the Town Council the Crafts followed with partiality their own advantages only, to the public detriment; and he believed that the only remedy would be their abolition.

That he did not stand entirely alone in this belief will be seen from what soon follows.

1436-7.—A petition was presented from the House of Commons to the King (Henry VI.) declaring that Craft-Gilds abused the privileges granted to them by enacting Ordinances hurtful to the common profit of the people. The substance of this petition forms the recital of the Act wherein and whereby it was sought to remedy the defects complained of. This was the first of a series of enactments intended to limit the powers and privileges of the Gilds.

The 15 Henry VI. c. 6 [1436-7], recited and enacted as follows :—

“*Item*, Whereas the Masters, Wardens, and people of the many Gilds, Fraternities, and other Companies incorporated, dwelling in divers parts of the realm, oftentimes by colour of rule and governance and other terms in general words to them granted and confirmed by Charters and Letters Patent of the King’s progenitors, make among themselves many unlawful and unreasonable Ordinances, as well as such things whereof the cognisance, punishment, and correction all only pertaineth to the King, Lords of Franchises, and other persons, and whereby our said Sovereign Lord the King, and other, be disherited of their profits and franchises, as of things which sound in confederacy for their singular profit and common damage to the people :

“The same our Lord the King, by the advice and assent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and at the prayer of the Commons aforesaid, hath ordained by authority of the same Parliament, that the Masters, Wardens, and people of every such Gild, Fraternity, or Company, incorporate betwixt this and the feast of St. Michael next ensuing, shall bring and cause all their Letters Patent to be Registered of record, before the Justices of the Peace in the Counties, or before the chief governors of the said Cities, Boroughs, and Towns where such Gilds, Fraternities, and Companies be. And moreover hath ordained and defended, by the authority aforesaid, that from henceforth no such Masters, Wardens, nor people make nor use no Ordinances which shall be to the disherison or diminution of the King’s franchises or of other, nor against the common profit of the people ; nor none other Ordinances of charge, if it be

not first discussed and approved for good and reasonable ; admitted by the Justices of the Peace, or the Chief Governors aforesaid, and before them entered of Record, and after by them revoked and repealed, if it be found and proved by them not lawful, or not reasonable ; and that upon pain to lose and forfeit the force and effect of all the articles comprised in the said Writs and Charters by which they might make any charters among themselves ; and moreover to lose and pay x *li*. [*£10*] to the King for every Ordinance that any of them doth make or use to the contrary, as often as he shall be of that, by due process and lawful manner, convict of record before any of the said Justices of Peace, or Chief Governors of Cities, Towns, and Borough, and this Ordinance shall endure as long as it shall please our said Sovereign Lord the King."

Herein seems to have originated the practice of enrolling Rules and Regulations with the Clerks of the Peace—a practice existing with Friendly Societies in our own time. (See 1503-4.)

1477.—The Fullers' and Dyers' Company was one of the twelve mysteries of the incorporated Gilds of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The Order had numerous rules dated May 6 this year, one of which shows the spirit of the age : "No Scotchman born shall be taken as apprentice, nor any such set to work, under a penalty of 20s. ; half thereof to go to the Society and half to the support of Tyne Bridge." The Gild was in existence in the early part of this (19th) century.

Fire Insurance Gilds.—During the first half of this century there existed in Schleswig-Holstein an institution designated Brand-gilden, originating probably out of an earlier fraternal association [Frith Gilds ?] existing in the middle ages and known as "Bruderliche." These latter were designed to protect the property of the members generally ; and were frequently under the protection of the municipal corporations. The Brand-gilden appear to have been a modification of the former, and to have been a State or Municipal Associations for local mutual Fire Insurance only. (See 1585.)



CHAPTER XXI.

CHRONOLOGICAL REVIEW—(*continued*).

THE Reformation (16th century) shook the whole system of Gilds to its foundation; and this was especially the case with the Religious Gilds of the laity, and the Gilds of the Kalenders. "In England (says Madox, "*Firma Burgi*," 27) these Religious Gilds have been judged to be founded in superstition;" and it was the same in all countries in which the Reformation gained ground. The Gilds were therefore abolished in all Protestant countries; but not on the Continent, as in England, in favour of the private purse of the King and his courtiers. On the contrary, we see in Northern Germany and Denmark, the property and income of these Gilds delivered everywhere, according to the intention of the founders, to the common treasury for the poor, to poor-houses, hospitals, and schools. (Brentano, p. 90.)

1503-4.—There was enacted 19 Henry VII. c. 7, which recited the 15 Henry VI. c. 6 (1436-7) already quoted, and that this Act had now expired; and it enacted that Corporations should not make or enforce any ordinances without the approbation of "the Chauncellor, Tresorer of Englonde and Cheffe Justices of ether Benche, or thre of them; or before bothe the Justices of Assises in ther cyrcuyte or progresse in that shyre wher suche actes or ordinaunces be made, uppon the peyne of forfeytoure of xl *li.* for every time that they do the contrarie." No orders were to be made by corporations to restrain suits in the King's Courts.

This last regulation, it is clear, was aimed at the usual regulations in Gilds of settling all disputes amongst themselves.

The bye-laws made by Corporations or Fellowships of Crafts, Gilds, and Fraternities, were at this time found to be in many ways against the King's prerogative, the common law of England, and the liberty of the subject: being (as Lord Bacon designated them) fraternities of evil: wherefore (says Macpherson, "*History of Commerce*," ii. p. 26) an Act of Parliament restrains the masters or wardens of such fellowships from making any new bye-laws or ordinances concerning

the prices of wares and other things, for their own singular profit, until first examined and approved of by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Treasurer, or King's Justices, on pain of forfeiting £40 for every such offence.

1530-1.—By 22 Henry VIII. c. 4, it is recited that the Act of 1503-4 was evaded: "Sithe which tyme dyvers Wardens and Fellowshipes have made Actes and Ordinaunces that every prentice shall paye at his first entre in their comon halle to the Wardens of the same fellowship some of them xls., some xxxs., some xxs., some xiijs. iiij*℥*, some vj. viij*℥*, some iijs. iiij*℥*, after their owne senester myndes and pleasure contrarie the menyng of the Acte aforesayd and to the great hurte of the Kynges true subjectes puttynge their Childe to be prentyse." Whereupon it was enacted that the fees on apprenticeship should not hereafter exceed ijs. vi*℥*; nor for his entry as a freeman iijs. iiij*℥*, upon pain of forfeiture of xl *℥*.

1536.—By 28 Henry VIII. c. 5—"An Acte for avoydyng of Exaccyons taken upon Prentesis in the Cyties, Boroughes and Townes corporatt"—the Statutes of 1530-1, and that of 1503-4, are recited, as also the evasion of these; it is further recited that oaths were imposed on Freemen by Companies in fraud of the said Acts; and then enacted that no oath shall be imposed by Companies in restraint of keeping shops by apprentices when made free; nor fees taken for freedoms beyond those limited in Statute 22 Henry VIII. c. 4.

1544.—The members of the twelve great City Gilds gave an illustration of the opulence to which they had attained at this date by lending to the King (Henry VIII.) the sum of £21,263 6s. 8d. towards providing means for caryng on his wars in Scotland, on the security of lands mortgaged to them. This, if a voluntary act—which it probably was not—turned out to be very unwise, inasmuch as it excited the cupidity of the Crown, and thus led to the shameless acts of confiscation which too speedily followed.

It is to be remarked that this is one of the earliest instances of public loans on record. Brentano, reviewing this event and those which followed, says:—

"From this period the extracting of money from the trading cor-

porations became a regular source of supply to Government. In most manifold ways Elizabeth, and afterwards James and Charles, contrived to screw out of the Companies their wealth. This was especially managed by the granting of patents for monopolies, and for the oversight and control of different trades, to courtiers, by which the public suffered quite as much as the Companies. During the Civil War, too, and the Commonwealth, the Companies had to suffer great exactions and oppressions."

1545.—By Statute 37 Henry VIII. c. 4—"An Act for Dissolucon of Colledges"—it was recited that diverse Colledges, Free-chappelles, Chauntries, Hospitalles, Fraternities, Brotherhoods, Guylds, and Stipendary Priests, "having perpetuity for ever," had misapplied the possessions thereof in various ways; and it was then exacted that all the same be dissolved, and the proceeds applied for supporting the King's expenses in wars, &c., and for the maintenance of the Crown, &c.

This measure—one of the early consequences of the Reformation—does not seem to have been entirely enforced until the commencement of the following reign. (See 1547.) The Gilds of London appear to have escaped its operations on the ground that they were Trading Companies. We suspect the loan of the preceding year may have had some relation to this exemption.



CHAPTER XXII.—*Chronological Review—(Continued).*

A. D. 1547.—By 1 Edw. VI. c. 14—"An Acte wherby certaine Chauntries, Colledges, Free Chapells, and the possessions of the same be given to the King's Ma^{te}"—it is recited that superstition and error in Christian religion "hath byn brought into the myndes and estimacon of men by reasone of the ignoraunce of their verie trewe and perfecte salvacon throughe the deathe of Jesus Christ, and by devising and phantasinge vayne opynions of Purgatorye and masses satisfactorye to be done for them which be departed, the

which doctryne and vayn opynion by nothing more is mayntayned and upholden then by the abuse of trentalls, chauntries, and other provisions made for the contynuaunce of the said blyndness and ignoraunce." It is then further recited that the revenues thereof had better be applied to schools, colleges, &c. The Act of 1545 is recited; and it is finally enacted, That all colleges, &c., existing within five years preceding this Parliament and not in the actual possession of the late or present King (except where exempted by the King's Commission), be now declared in the actual seisin and possession of the King, with their lands, and revenues. And all Brotherhoods or Gilds and their possessions, except Companies of Trade, were vested in the King. Commissioners were to be appointed under the Great Seal to carry out the purposes of this Act.

The provisions of this Act, which were very sweeping, secured the practical annihilation of all the Gilds except those of the merchant and municipal classes. The King's Commissioners entered upon their task with avidity. In the questions they addressed to the towns were embraced the following: 1. Whether they had any peculiar Brotherhood or Gild within their Corporation? 2. Whether they had any College, Chantry, Chapel, Fraternity, Brotherhood, or Gild within the same? . . . 3. Whether they possessed any and what jewels, goods, ornaments, chattels, and other things appertaining to any Chantry, &c.? And, lastly, whether they had any other yearly profits or advantages (exclusively of those already mentioned) which ought to bring them within the Act? Further, in order to insure correct returns to the above queries, the Commissioners were empowered to survey all such Mysteries, Crafts, and Corporations, and to inspect all evidences, compositions, books of accompts, and other writings which they might possess.

Strype, in his edition of Stow (vol. ii. p. 336), says: "This was a great blow to the Corporations of London; nor was there any other way for them but to purchase off these rent-charges, and get as good pennyworths as they could of the King; and this they did in the 3rd of Edward VI. by selling other of their lands to enable them to make these purchases. This cost the Companies £18,700, which

possessions, when they had thus cleared again, they employed to good uses, according to the first intent of them, abating the superstition."

The Provincial Gilds were not quite extinguished by the operation of this Act, and the confiscation it sanctioned. Some of them at least continued to hold their meetings for purposes of conviviality and mutual assistance. Blomefield (*History of Norfolk*) mentions several which survived—one of these, in a Norfolk village, whose lands were seized, retained their Gildhall until 1650, when the effects were sold. These included 30 lbs. of pewter vessels; 92 lbs. of lead; 4 spits weighing 169 lbs.; a metal pot weighing 44 lbs.; 2 pots of brass weighing 89 lbs.; and a brass pan weighing 9 lbs.—"clear proofs (as has been remarked) of the jolly proceedings of the Gilds." Some of the lesser Gilds were indeed so poor as not to have a room of their own; but most of them, in towns and even villages, had their Gildhall. (*Quarterly Review*, vol. cxvi. p. 323.)

1585.—We have again to turn our attention to the Continent of Europe, and more particularly to the North German States. We have already (under date fifteenth century) in this article spoken of the existence of early fraternal associations designated *Bruderliche*, which we take to have been an adaptation of Frith-gilds to the common purposes of protecting the lives and property of their members. These were existing in Schleswig-Holstein in the early part of the fifteenth century under the altered designation of *Brandgilden*, and appear at this date to have taken the shape of local Mutual Fire Insurance Associations, on what is now known as the State or Municipal plan. These early associations operated under the authority of regularly drawn ordinances; some stipulating for payment by the insured of instalments by way of assessment, for the purpose of creating an indemnity fund; others merely required the contributions of relief in kind. The oldest of these associations now existing appears to be the *Neuendorfer Mobiliargilde*, founded 1585. We take this to mean the Gild for the insurance of movable property established at Neuendorf.

In the City of Hamburg there were some of these associations existing, one of which seems to have taken the designation of *Feur Contract* (Fire Contract) in 1591. This was one (if not the first)

of the earliest distinct fire insurance associations of which we have any knowledge.

Of the *Brandgilden* founded in the ancient Duchy of Schleswig-Holstein in the seventeenth century, there are still existing seven; the most important being that of the nobility—*Adelige Brandgilden*.

1628.—Blomefield, in his History of Norfolk, mentions a Gild which was "erected" at Atleburgh in that county, at which on Midsummer-day, 1630, above 2,000 of the country folks were hospitably entertained. It seems probable that what we at this day know as country fairs, with their shows and gaudy canvas paintings, may be, at least in some cases, but degenerated survivals of the "shows" and "pageants" formerly the accompaniments of Gild feasts.

1694.—The Gild of Fellowship Porters in Edinburgh became united with the Society of Trone-men in the same City, and so took the form and shape of an ordinary Friendly Society, not, however, without further changes in 1738, which will be found fully detailed in the same article. There can be no reasonable doubt that many of the early Gilds have undergone similar transformation; and hence have not died out, but simply become modernised.

1716.—The *Courant* of July 7 contained the following advertisement: "For the continuance of the Mutual Society the annual feast of the fraternity of St. James (? St. John's) at Clerkenwell will be held as usual on Wednesday, 25th inst., at Jerusalem Hall, within the said parish. The sermons to be preached by the Rev. Mr. Hendley. Prayers will begin at ten o'clock exactly. Tickets may be had at the Jerusalem Tavern on Clerkenwell Green on or before Saturday the 21st inst., but after that day none are to be delivered. N.B.—Stewards are appointed for the year ensuing."

1722.—Mr. Alex. Pennecuick, "Burgess and Gild Brother"—a well-known literary man of that period—compiled "The History of the Blue Blanket: or Craftmen's Banner; containing the fundamental principles of the Good Town of Edinburgh, with the powers and Prerogatives of the Crafts thereof." This little book, which has passed through several editions (2nd 1780, another 1832), is of considerable general interest; but it contains nothing throwing any light upon the phase of the subject now under investigation.

1742.—There was published at Reading: “A History of the Brotherhood or Guild of the Holy Ghost in the Chapel of the Holy Ghost, near Basingstoke, in Hampshire, by Samuel Loggon, 8vo.”

1794.—The Report of a Committee of the House of Commons, to which had been referred the petitions of the Wool-combers of the West of England, complaining of certain machines constructed for the combing of wool, contains the following, which indicates a second transformation—the first having been from a Gild into a Friendly Society, the next is from a Friendly Society into a Trades Union Association :—

“If Wool-combers out of work, by going into some county, where the wool is not worked up, cannot get employment, they assist at the hay and corn harvest ; and if all these fail, they have recourse to their Clubs. The Clubs are supported from a contribution of every Wool-comber (who is willing to be a member of any Club) according to the exigencies of their affairs. The one end of it is to enable the Wool-comber to travel from place to place to seek for employment when work is scarce where he resides ; and the other end is to have relief when he is sick, wherever he may be ; and if he should die, to be buried by the Club ; and it is necessary for him to entitle himself to be relieved by these Clubs, to have a certificate from the Club to which he belongs, that he has behaved well in and to the wool-combing trade, and that he is an honest man ; but if he defrauds anybody, he loses his claim to that certificate, and to the advantage belonging to it.”

Here was a practical means of enforcing good moral conduct, which was so essential a feature in the early Gilds. Other transitions of a like character have followed. The Provincial Gilds have indeed very generally taken the shape of friendly societies or benevolent associations.





HISTORY OF GILDS.



PART III.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY.

WHILE the preceding chapters have made us familiar, first with the aims and objects of Gilds, and next with the vicissitudes through which they have passed, consequent upon legislation and national polity ; our review would be still far from complete if we did not trace the Gilds to the localities of their origin, and there see them as they actually existed, and study alike how far they were influenced by surrounding circumstances, or how much, and in what direction, they exerted any controlling influence upon the trade and industry of such places. The difficulty of procuring such details, unbiassed by the predilections of the intermediate historian, is considerable ; but I must do all that can be done to present the simple facts in a trustworthy manner.

The mode of arrangement is first the COUNTIES, in alphabetical order, and then such *Towns* in those counties (also alphabetical) as present Gild features of consequence, either by reason of the number or the character of their Gilds. In some cases, such for instance as *Liverpool* (LANCASHIRE), the record will be found especially instructive ; and not much less so in other ancient towns.

Berkshire.—This county has not been regarded as remarkable for its Gilds, but its county town presents some features of especial interest.

Reading.—The *Gild Merchant* of this town existed at a very early period, and at first was little more than a society of mechanics and tradesmen, formed into one body for the mutual advantage of all its members, without assuming to reach the government of the borough. The charter of Henry III. (1253) did not alter this state of matters. The Abbot and monks of Reading had nearly two centuries previously obtained a charter from Henry I., and these exercised considerable control over the town.

Gradually the Gild assumed municipal authority, which brought its wardens into conflict with the abbots; but in 1506 the King's Justices decided in favour of the authority of the Gild in the nomination of wardmen. In the reign of Henry VI. there was a letter addressed by that monarch to the Warden of the Gild (year not specified), the purport of which was to tell the Warden that he must bear no mace, *if it offended the Abbot of Reading!* The Warden of the Gild was only the humble servant of the Abbot, and must not presume to have any mark of authority, save two tipped-staves borne by the Abbot's bailiff. The Abbot and the bailiff were supreme; so, Mr. Warden, do not carry a mace, or let any one else carry it; be content with the two tipped-staves of the Abbot! But later the authority of the Church waned, and that of the Gilds, which took municipal form, increased.

I may now pass on to a review of the several companies "belonging to the Gild Merchant of Reading," as found in the Corporation records, supposed to have been written about the reign of Henry VI., that is, after the Reformation, and the accompanying Dissolution of the Monasteries:—

1. *Mercers and Drapers' Company*, comprising the mercers, drapers, potuaries [earthenware], haberdashers, chapmen, taylors, and cloth-drawers.

The fines on admission to this Company were: For a mercer or draper, £4; a potuary, £3; for the other trades, £2 respectively.

The principal trade regulations were: (a) Any foreigner [non-freeman] retailing cloth in the town, to forfeit 10s. each time. (b) No mercer or tailor to retail cloth or women's hosen, under pain of iiis. ivd. each time. (c) No taylor may set a journeyman to work,

except he give him meat, drink, wages and lodging in his own house, on forfeiture of *iiis. ivd.* (*d*) No haberdasher, except he be a freeman, to sell hats or caps, by retail, within the borough, except straw hats, on forfeiture of twelve pence.

2. *Cutlers and Bellfounders' Company*, including the cutlers, bellfounders, braziers, pewterers, smiths, pinners, barbers, carpenters, joiners, fletchers [arrow makers], wheelers, basket makers, coopers, sawyers, bricklayers, card makers [woolcombers' cards], turners, plumbers, painters, and glaziers.

The fines of admission into this Company varied from £3 for a bell-founder down to 5s. for a wheeler.

The principal Rules, or Trade regulations, were as follows :—

(*a*) No smith may sell iron wares within the borough, except a freeman, on forfeiture of *iiis.* each time.

(*b*) If any barber, who is a foreigner, shall draw teeth in any part of the town, except in a barber's shop, he shall forfeit *xijd.* each time.

(*c*) Any barber inhabiting within the borough, shaving, trimming, dressing, or cutting any person on Sunday, *except on the four fair days*, shall forfeit for each time twelve pence.

Note.—The following curious bye-law was made by the Corporation in 1443, at the commencement of the dispute between the Houses of York and Lancaster, and was probably intended to prevent unlawful meetings taking place under the mask of a barber's shop : "The mayor and burgesses of Reading, grant and ordain, that from this time forward, no barber of Reading open any shop, nor shave any man, after ten of the clock at night, between Easter and Michaelmas, nor after nine of the clock in the night, from Michaelmas to Easter, but if [except] it be any stranger or any worthy man of the town, he shall pay 300 tiles* (*tegulas*) to the Gild-hall of

* The form of this fine may be accounted for in the fact that thatch was beginning to be superseded by tile roofs; the practice of making a market for tiles in the manner here shown was probably to keep the importance of their use impressively in view. The order was no mere pretext, for shortly afterwards one John Bristol was fined 2,100 tiles for having shaved seven persons after the time specified, but which levy, on account of his poverty, was afterwards reduced to 1,200.

Reading, as often times as he is found faulty, to be received by the cofferers for the time being.

(*d*) No carpenter may retain a bachelor except as an indented servant for a year, and lodge and board him in his own house, on forfeiture of xij*d.* each time.

3. *The Turners' and Leather Sellers' Company*, embracing the tanners, leather-sellers, shoe-makers, curriers, glovers, sadlers, jerkin-makers, bottle-makers, collar-makers, and cobblers.

The fines payable for admittance to this Company varied from £4 for a tanner to 5*s.* for a collar-maker.

The Rules or Trade regulations of the Gild were :—

(*a*) No shoemaker to make any boots, or shoes, in any part of the Town, but only in Shoe-makers' row, that is to say, from the East side of the Street from the Forbury-gate, unto the Hallowed-brook, upon pain of forfeiting iiii*s.* iv*d.* each time.

(*b*) No foreigner to bring into the borough shoes or boots for sale except on Fair-days, on forfeiture of iiii*s.* iv*d.* each time.

(*c*) Shoemakers to board and lodge their journeymen in their own houses, being unmarried, on pain of forfeiting for each time xij*d.*

(*d*) There shall be no bear-baiting or bull-baiting on the Sabbath-day during service, on pain of xij*d.* to be paid by every householder where the baiting is.

Why this last regulation should have been attached to this particular Gild does not appear.

4. *Clothiers and Clothworkers' Company*, which included the clothiers, dyers, weavers, shearmen, shuttle-makers, and ash-burners.

The fines on admission were of two amounts, viz., £2 for clothiers, dyers, weavers, and fullers, and 10*s.* for shuttle-makers, cloth-drawers, and ash-burners.

The Rules of the Gild were the following :—

(*a*) Clothiers using or occupying in their houses more than two broad looms, shall forfeit for each loom *x*s.**, but Mr. Aldworth [he had been Mayor] to be allowed four.

(*b*) No clothier shall weave in his own house cloth for another clothier, on pain of vi*s.* viij*d.* each time.

(*c*) Any person of the weaving business who shall be proved false

in conveying away, or detaining any yarn, shall be for ever disfranchised.

(*d*) If any weaver has more journeymen than he can lodge in his house, he is to give notice to the Warden of the Company how many he has more, and the Warden shall assign them a meete house to dwell in, on pain for not giving notice *xij**d*.

(*e*) Any clothier being a shearman, who shall work any work of any other clothier but his own, shall forfeit each time *iiis. ivd*.

(*f*) Any clothier putting his cloth to burle, rowe [dressing by the hand?] or shear, to any millman, or any that keep a fulling mill, shall pay for each *iiis. ivd*., except Mr. Aldworth, who may have two cloths weekly burled at Caversham-mill during the time he shall have any interest therein.

(*g*) Persons putting wool out to dry, or hanging cloth on the Sabbath-day, to forfeit *xij**d*.

The Victuallers and Inn-holders' Company, comprising the vintners, innholders, bakers, brewers, butchers, fishmongers, chandlers, malt-makers, wood-mongers, salters, and flax-drapers.

The fines payable on admission to this Company were £3 for an innholder and a malt-maker, and £2 for each of the other trades respectively.

The Rules regulating this Gild were not recorded as in the previous cases; but from extraneous sources the following facts are gathered :—

(*a*) The Victuallers were strictly enjoined to observe Lent, and were forbidden to kill or dress flesh meat in that season, without a licence from the Abbot, while his authority existed, and afterwards of the Mayor.

(*b*) To prevent impositions in the price and strength of beer sold at public-houses, two ale tasters were appointed to set the price thereof; and if the Mayor for the time being happened to be a victualler, the following addition was made to the oath taken by him on his entrance into office: "That he would truly and indifferently, according to the plenty or scarcity of victuals within the borough, assess and set the price and assize thereof, for the time he should remain in office."

Note.—From this it appears the Corporation has assumed the power of setting a maximum on other articles of provision as well as on bread and ale.

(c) The price of ale and beer set by assize, was, for double or strong beer viijs. per barrel, or $2\frac{3}{4}$ d. per gallon; ale ivs. the dozen, and small beer ivs. the barrel; but for retail, a full quart of the best beer id., and of small beer $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

6. *Vintners' Company.*—Regarding this Gild I have no details.

The number of freemen in the borough belonging to the different companies was, at this period, about three hundred. (*Vide* Man's "History of Reading.")



CHAPTER XXIV.

GILDS OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE.—This county had many Gilds, some of the chief of which I shall pass under review.

Cambridge.—I have already (chapter xv.) quoted the Ordinances of a Gild existing in this university town in the Saxon period. The following are some of those existing later :—

1. *Gild Merchant*, founded 1200.—John, by charter dated 8th January, 1200, granted to the burgesses of Cambridge, "That they should have a Gild of merchants." But during several centuries I find no trace of its proceedings.

1547.—1 Edward VI. At a Common Day, held on Friday after the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, it was agreed by all the commoners there assembled "that all the free burgesses of this Towne that now be or hereafter shal be, shal be bretheren of y^e Guyld Merchaunt within this Towne. And that they shal yerly gyve their attendaunce upon the Aldermen & Counselers at y^e same Guyld, upon this paynes ensuyng, viz., eny Aldermen that shal be absent to paie to the use of y^e same Guyld xij*d*, eny baylyffe in his yere viij*d*, eny other baylyffe and such as have been Tresorers to paie v*d*, & eny Burgesse under those degrees iij*d*. And any foren Burgesse that shal be absent, yf he have resonable warninge, to paie to the use of

y^e same Guyld yerly xij*℥*: Provyded alwayes that the Aldermen and Counselers of y^e same Guyld shall have auctoryte to dyscharge all such parcells of the paynes aforesaid, as shal be forfeite by eny fre Burgesse which shall not be able to paie the same by the reason of the decaye of their substance at eny tyme or tymes hereafter." (Cooper's Annals of Cambridge, ii. 2.)

1556.—On the 12th of January it was agreed by the most part of the Aldermen and the "four-and-twenty" then assembled, "that the Gylde called Guild Merchant shall be kept agayne as yt hathe been used in tymes past, on the Sondaie after Relique Sondaie, and that Mr. Maior shal be Alderman thereof for this yere, and the Tresirers masters thereof." And at a Common Day held on 2nd July this year, it was "agreed that the two first articles made in the first yere of Kinge Edward the Syxt, in the ordennance for the Gylde Merchaunt, shal be in effect, & that all paynes and forfaytures in the same shal be voide, and that Mr. Mayer, for y^e tyme being, shal be Alderman, & give to the Guilde a bucke or vjs viij*℥* for the same, & also to paie for his Dynner ijs. Every Alderman & his wife to pay ijs, whether they be there or no. Every of the foure Baylives for the tyme being, with their wives, to paie xx*℥*, whether they be there or no. Every of the xxiiijth & suche as have been Baylifes, or be dischargid thereof, with their wives, to pay xx*℥*. Every Tresorer, & suche as have been Tresorers, & be not Baylifes & their wyfs, to paie xv*℥*, whether they be there or no; and every other Burgesse to paie for his Dinner xij*℥*, & not to bringe his wife, & yf he be absent to paie iiij*℥*. Every Wydow which was wyfe to a Baylyve or Tresorer, xij*℥*, & beinge absent, to paie iiij*℥*. (*Vide Corporation Common Day Book.*)

1556.—There was a slight modification of the fines of the preceding year.

1639.—The Corporation, on 24th August, made the following order: "It is ordered that the supper of the Guild Merchant, yearly held on Bartholomew night, shall hereafter be kept & the charge thereof borne & in every respect & degree be conformable to the supper yearly held the Tuesday after Twelwe [day], viz., the Maior to pay iiis. iiij*℥*. Every Alderman, ijs. vj*℥*. The Bailiffs, 24,

Town Clearke, & Attorneys, ijs. Every Comoner, being a substedie man, xij*d*, & those that are not substedie men, viij*d*. And that those somes shall be paid respectively by every Maior, Alderman, Officer, & Freeman being any part of that day in the Toune, whether he be present at the said supper or not, upon demand of the Tressurers, or one of them, within one week after the said supper, upon paine of every one fayling to make paiment to forfeitt five shillings to the use of the Corporacion, & to be barred for giving any voice in Hall for xij monethes after. (Annals of Cambridge, iii. 293.)

It seems clear that the Corporation of this Borough had become grafted on this Gild as early as 1547.

2. *Gild of Corpus Christi*.—The date of the origin of this Gild seems obscure, but the following facts appear:—

1349.—In a deed by which the Aldermen and bretheren of this Gild appointed John Hardy curator of their Estates, they request William Horwood, the Mayor, to set his seal of office, as better known than that of the Gild.

1350.—William de Lenne, and Isabel his wife, on their admission as members of this Gild, expended half a mark in the play of the “Children of Israel.” (Masters’ Hist. of Corp. Chr. Coll., 5.)

1352.—On 7th Nov. the King, at the request of Henry, Duke of Lancaster, granted licence to the Alderman and bretheren of the Gild of Corpus Christi and St. Mary to found a college or house of scholars, chaplains, and others, under the government of a master, and by the name of the House of Scholars of Corpus Christi and the Blessed Mary of Cambridge. The college established in pursuance of this licence was, from its proximity to St. Benedict’s Church, for centuries known as Bene’t College. In more modern times it has become designated by its original name of Corpus Christi College. (Cooper’s Annals, i. 103.)

3. *Gild of Holy Trinity*, founded 1377.—The officers were to be an Alderman, two Stewards, and a Dean; with a Chaplain if the Gild could afford it. Services to be attended on the eve and the feast of the Holy Trinity. No priest shall have anything to do with the affairs of the Gild. There were to be four meetings every year; when Stewards to give an account, and officers chosen. Help to

poor bretheren, also to wives of bretheren [there were no sisteren in this Gild—a feature common to many, but not all of the Cambridge Gilds at this period]. New members to be admitted with consent of Gild; to pay 13s. 4d. to Gild, 6d. to the Alderman, and 4d. to the Dean. A member might, on good cause shown, leave the Gild for a time. Proper respect was to be paid to the Alderman, who was to appease quarrels. This Gild was approved of by the Bishop of Ely, who granted two Indulgences in its favour.

The other Gilds of this town may be reviewed very briefly:—

4. *Gild of the Annunciation*, founded 1379, “in order that among us and our successors kindness should be cherished more and more and discord be driven out.” Payments to be made yearly by every brother; but from these John Cornewail is, by common consent, to be free, on account of the trouble he took in founding the Gild. There shall be four great torches; and also a chest with two locks and two keys. Quarrels shall be put to arbitration. No Parson nor Baker shall come into the Gild, nor any wife whose husband is not a member. No money shall be wasted over lawsuits.

5. *Gild of the blessed Virgin Mary* (St. Butolph’s).—If any brother comes to want by mishap or sickness, so that it is not through plunder by harlots, or through any other bad way of life, and he has not the means of living, he shall have 7d. a week during life, from the Gild, and a new gown every year. If two bretheren are at same time in want, then 4d. per week each. The poor brothers shall be buried at the cost of the Gild; and all, whether rich or poor, shall be kept in memory. Every incomer shall give to all the rest the kiss of brotherhood.

6. *Gild of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Fuxta Fforum)*.—The Clerk and Beadle shall be excused from the annual payments. There shall be a Chaplain when they can afford it; but help to the poor bretheren shall come before this. There shall be a chest to keep money and goods in; and no money nor goods shall be applied without the consent of all the Gild.

The Ordinances of this Gild were declared good and lawful by the Consistory of Ely, under a decree dated 1st February, 1385.

Several other Gilds in Cambridge were founded afterwards,

(although upon the model, perhaps the foundations, of earlier Gilds), viz., the Gild of St. Clement in 1431; Gild of St. Peter and St. Paul in 1438; and the Gild of All Saints in 1473.

Wisbeach.—Various Gilds existed in this ancient town, of which I shall give a brief outline :—

Gild of the Holy Trinity.—This Gild was founded in 2 Richard II., 1379, under the full title of “The Guild or Fraternity of the Holy Trinity in Wysbech.” The affairs were directed by a number of persons, consisting sometimes of twelve, and from that to eighteen, who assembled once a year at the time of the Feast of the Holy Trinity, and were called “an Inquisition,” at other times an “Inquest,” or “a Jury,” by whom the Alderman and other officers of the Gild were elected. At first only six officers were appointed, viz. : an Alderman; two officers called Scabini [Scabini, Scavini, or Skyvens—these were guardians, governors, or stewards, and had charge of the goods and effects of the Gild. They were sworn, when they received the chattels of the house, to employ the same faithfully to the good of the Gild]; a Clerk; a Dean [in 1640 he is called “Decanum Ecclesiæ.” In 1513 he is ordered to warn the Aldermen and bretheren to bring in their books, accounts, &c. In 1537 he is ordered to give monition to the Inquest to have the accounts ready at the election]; an Hostiliarius [a sort of steward of the hall], to assist in entertaining strangers.

The accounts of the Fraternity were commenced to be kept in considerable detail, and apparently with much exactitude. Inscribed in the book was the following : “Memorandum that here begins the book of the Accountants of the Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity.” Then follows, A.D. 1379, the account of Adam Reynold, the Chaplain, Simon Pokedych, Adams Mareys, Gilbert Grant, the Skyvens of the Guild of the Holy Trinity of Wysbech, from Sunday on the feast of the Holy Trinity, in the 2nd year of King Richard II., after the Conquest, to the same Sunday in the 3rd year of King Richard II. for one whole year : Imprimis, in a tenth received for the Chaplain. Also in the sum of £4 5s. 8d. received of the brotherhood of the said Fraternity, from the Feast of St. Michael, in the third year of the reign of Richard II. to the Feast of St. Michael

next following, except the pence which were received of ten novices, for the third time from the nativity of St. John the Baptist next following: sum £4 9s. Also in the sum of 26s. 8d. received of sixty-four brethren of the said fraternity, for the purchase of an image of the Holy Trinity—sum, £1 6s. 8d. Also in the sum of 46s. 8d. received of fourteen novices [named], of each of them 3s. 4d.—sum, £2 6s. 8d. Also in the sum of £5 11s. 8d. received of sixty-seven brethren of the aforesaid fraternity, viz., of each of them 20d.—sum, £5 11s. 8d. Total sum, £13 14s.

Expended.—First they account in a payment made to Mr. Adam Reynold, the officiating Chaplain of the said fraternity, for one whole year, viz., from the feast of St. Michael, last past, to the said feast next following, £4 6s. 8d.—sum, £4 6s. 8d. Also they reckon for the purchase of one image of the Holy Trinity, 25s. 3d. And they paid the plasterers 8s.: and for one man's assistance for the said plasterers for one day, 4d.; and they paid to John Kynsper, for the removal of *Parclos*, with timber and bards in iron nails for the same, and for beer given to the workmen, 3s. 2½d.; and they gave to John Flaxman for his labour to Walpole for carriage of the tent, 6d.; for sand and whiting bought, 12d.—sum, £1 18s. 3½d. Also they reckon for two pieces of woollen cloth bought in London, for hoods for the brethren of the said fraternity, with the carriage from London to Wisbech, £5 6s. 8d.—sum, £5 6s. 8d. Also they reckon for bread bought, 3s. 6d.; for beer bought, 16s. 6d.; for wine, 2s. 7½d.; for beef bought, 3s.; for saffron [used in cakes], 1d.; for eggs, 4d.; for one quart of verjuice, 2d.; for fish, 3d.; cheese, 13d.; for beer given at the fitting-up of the hall, 4d.; for the cook's wages, 6d.; as a reward for the brethren at Lynn for their care and labour, 6s. 8d.; for the expense of Nicholas Tyneteshalle to Lynn, and for the purchase of apparel for ten dancers, 5s. 8d.; for iron nails bought for fitting-up of the hall, 6d.; and they gave to Robert, son of Thomas, for the hall and ornamenting the same, 3s. 4d.; and they gave to John Symond, for one man to hang up the burial things, 8d.; and they paid for a tent in part of payment, 10s.; for paper bought for the accountant, one farthing—sum, £3 6s. 4d. Sum of all the expenditure, £14 17s. 10½d.; and so the expenditure exceeds the

receipts £1 3s. 10½d., which ought to be paid by the sixty-seven brethren, viz., each of them 5d.; and thus there would remain 1s. 11½d., which the said brothers expended in wine before they departed, and so, from the account, nothing remains. Amen. No further account follows for a period of fifty-four years.

A memorandum of all the necessities belonging to the Gild of the Holy Trinity embraced the following:—

Imprimis : One crown, silver gilt ; also one pair of beads of coral ; also nine pair of beads of amber ; also three pair of beads of jet ; two pair for three of the silver ones ; also two pair of beads of coral, with twenty silver ; also, hanging over the aforesaid beads of amber, three crucifixes and three silver rings ; also one crucifix ; also of single rings, ten rings ; also of double brooches, nine brooches ; also of brooches with stones, six brooches ; also of single rings with stones, eight rings ; also one silver clasp, with nine pair of silver stomachers ; also one double crucifix ; also one stag with a gilt head ; also one *ryn* with a stone, and one golden Jesu ; also one chain with a crucifix ; also two Lambs of God of silver ; also one gilt brooch ; also one brooch ; also two small brooches ; also one pair of beads of beryll, with a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary ; also one *accor*, which is called Dowbell [double ?] W, with a crown ; also one silver-gilt ring ; also four stones of crystal and a beryll ; one branch of coral.

1423.—The following “ orders ” were made and enrolled:—

That each brother should have a hood, on pain of two pounds of wax.

Item. That all the brethren should dine together on the principal day.

That certain silver, paid into the hands of R. Claycroft and another, should be delivered to John Lambe, the alderman of the Gild—that is, £10.

That four marks, which were paid into the hands of Richard Loke, should be taken and delivered to the said Alderman.

That all the brethren of the Gild, who should have any silver or gold paid into their hands, should be discharged thereof on the principal day.

That the Alderman should receive of John Tofty, of Elm, one pot, which Richard Barker gave to the said Gild.

That the Alderman should receive one dish, which was delivered into the hands of John Koope.

That the leaden vase be delivered into the hands of John Lambe.

Certain repairs were ordered to be done to the Hall, and the workmen were paid fourpence per day.

Then follows an account of the moneys received for the use of the Hall by the Clerks of the Market. Walter Rokeland is named the Dean of the Gild before the altar. Account is rendered for 3s. 6d. for the souls of eleven persons there enumerated, with expenses of wax. Two or three brethren were called upon to be pledges for what should be delivered into the care of the Aldermen.

1453.—The brotherhood kept up an annual feast, which was held on what was called “the Principal Day,”—presumably the feast of Holy Trinity. Several items are stated of provisions to be procured, such as a calf and a lamb, the price being 2s. 6d. each; and a quarter of veal, 4½d., and a minstrel was to be allowed. At this time there are said to have been twenty-three couples of brothers and sisters. An ordinance was then made that all the brothers and sisters should come on the principal day into the Hall, viz., at the first and second vespers, and also at the great mass, and there sit with the Alderman at church, according to ancient laudable custom, on pain of eight pounds of wax; with a further order that when it should happen that any brother or sister of the Gild in the town of Wysebeche should decease, that all the brothers and sisters should come to church with the brother or sister deceased, to make prayer and offering for his or her soul, on pain of one pound of wax.

1460.—About this date (1 Edward IV.) some disputes appear to have arisen concerning the affairs of the Gild, and a fee of 6s. 8d. was paid to a serjeant-at-law for advice. A silver chalice was purchased this year weighing 29½ oz. at 2s. 6d. per oz.—£3 12s. 4d. An unusually grand feast was given, presumably on the result of the bloody battle of Towton, between the rival houses of York and Lancaster.

As an indication of the increasing wealth of the Gild, John Ketyl

was this year appointed bailiff "to direct, manage, and to farm" all the lands and tenements, assisted by two others; the said John to have 16s.

The Chaplain was directed that after the offertory he should pray "for the good estate, tranquillity, and peace of all the Realm of England." The Alderman and his brethren were directed to have a "mornspeche" on the Friday before Trinity Sunday, at 7 o'clock, at the Gildhall. The Clerk was ordered to purchase at "Sterrebridge Fayre" certain wax shots and seven torches, for the purposes of the principal feast.

1475.—As the possessions of the Gild increased, additional officers became necessary. Thus the elections this year embraced one Alderman, two Skyvens (Scabini) or Stewards of the Hall; one Scribe, a Dean, two Storekeepers, Server in the Hall; Keeper of the Jewels. The salary of the Bailiff of the lands was raised to £1 6s. 8d. All the jewels of the Gild were to be put into safe keeping, with four keys, to be kept by the Alderman, Vicar, and two others. A Common Seal was adopted. Thomas Blower devised to the Gild, for the salvation of his soul, one messuage, known as the almshouse. Certain ornaments for the altar of the Holy Trinity were directed to be delivered to the Dean; and the altar was to be prepared for the principal feast "with nine crowns and framed with the jewels."

1502.—Fresh regulations were made for the celebration of Mass in the Chapel of Holy Trinity. And in the following year the Vicar of Wisbeach was appointed Alderman of the Gild, and held the office for several successive years.

1506.—It was ordered that the Steward in the Hall and server at the kitchen board should see that every brother and sister himself served in the Hall, on the serving out to the poor the viands remaining from the great feast on Trinity Sunday.

1508.—It was ordered that the Schoolmaster have from Midsummer next 8 marks sterling for his wages. Ten acres of pasture in Fenland field were let for twenty years at 10s. per annum; and four persons were appointed to overlook the writings, and to ride about and view the Gild lands.

1513.—The statutes and ordinances of the Gild were ordered to be translated from the Latin into English ; but no English copy has been found.

1514.—More stringent religious observances were imposed in the conduct of the proceedings of the Gild, and on the “ death-days ” of the brethren.

1519.—Ordered, “ That the Chamberlains and Bailiffs do provide four tapers of wax to burn all the time while Grace is saying, and each of them holding in their hands a pot of ale of a quarte ; and when Grace is ended, the said ale to be given to the people then present, according to the old ordinance.”

1521 (13 Henry VIII.)—Ordered that the Steward of the Gild should upon the Gild day before Mass, at the fetching of the Alderman to Church, provide a competent breakfast for the said Alderman, brethren and sisters of the Gild, and all to have drink, at least if they would. The election of officers embraced the Alderman, Dean, and Clerk, also one Steward of the Hall (*Seneschall Aulae*), one server in the kitchen, two cup-bearers (*Ceph. Gerent.*), two scabini (*Servientes Pauperum*), two chamberlains (*In Camar.*), one bailiffe (*In Ballivum*), one porter at the door.

1524.—It was ordered that every brother and sister should give their attendance and come to the Gildhall every year on the vigil of the Holy Trinity, and so go with the Alderman from the said Hall to Church, to the first Evensong of the said vigil ; the next day to Mass and Evensong ; and the next day to be at Church at the Dirge and Mass of Requiem, and there to pray and offer for all the founders, brethren, and sisters’ souls of the Gild, on pain, without lawful excuse, of one pound of wax.

The Inquest now appears to have assumed a kind of judicial authority : two individuals were this year amerced 3s. 4d. each for abusing the Alderman.

1540.—The Act for the Dissolution of Monasteries was passed, and the detailed records of the Gild cease. The Gild had always been of a religious order. It appears to have kept in existence for several years afterwards. Thus on 24th June, 1547, there is record of the expense of the Alderman and three others meeting the Com-

missioners at Ely, where an inquiry into Religious Establishments was proceeding.

1551.—The proceedings of the Gild finally closed, and its record concluded with an account of the lands and messuages then in its possession; many whereof are described as the gifts of certain individuals there named—amongst whom is William Belman, who is said “in honour of the Holy Trinity” to have built an eleemosynary house called “a Gylde Hall,” the site of which we believe cannot now be identified. The whole possessions are then enumerated, and seem to have consisted of 277 acres and 3 roods of land, independent of the eleemosynary house, and an edifice called the almshouse, near the Churchyard of St. Peter, together with two other messuages, one of which was situate on the Castle dyke.

The Seal of the Gild has not been preserved. It was most probably surrendered to the Commissioners.

There appear to have been several minor or lesser Gilds in the town; but all these made submission to that of Holy Trinity, and were allowed to use its Hall. The names of them seem to have been: St. George, Corpus Christi, The Cross, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. Lawrence, The Holy Virgin Mary. (*Vide* Watson’s History of Wisbeach.)



CHAPTER XXV.

GILDS OF DERBYSHIRE AND DEVONSHIRE.

DERBYSHIRE.—The Gilds in this county do not seem to have been so numerous or so widely extended as in many other counties of England.

Chesterfield.—In this old town there were several Gilds more or less remarkable:—

Gild of the Blessed Mary.—“This Gild was begun on the day of the Circumcision of our Lord, A.D. 1218, to hold certain services, and the better to assure the liberties of the town. First, all shall swear to uphold the due rights of the Church; also they shall swear

to take care for the rights of the lords of the place ; also they shall swear to guard all their liberties, within town and without town, and to give trusty help thereto whenever it may be needed." A chaplain was to be appointed to celebrate services on days named ; each brother was to bequeath by his will, towards masses for the souls of the brethren, 12d. out of every £ of his chattels [5 per cent.], but he need not bequeath more than 40s. in all ; or none, if his effects were below the value of 20s. Rites in honour of the dead. Help to be given in case of loss by fire, murrain, robbery, or by any other mishap—"so that such loss come not through his own lust, or gluttony, or dice-play, or other folly, viz., each brother 2d." Also aid to be given to those who, through age, loss of limb, or leprosy, are disabled or cannot support themselves, viz., "the bretheren who are able shall in turn supply him with needful food, or shall find for him a house of religion where he may stay during life." The deaths of past Aldermen and of "Hugh of the Peak" [either a founder or benefactor] "shall be yearly kept by the bretheren even to the end of time." Whoever has wronged another by deed or word, and will not make amends, shall be put out of the Gild. Every brother shall be helped to defend himself at law. Whoever has had loss or cost for the sake of the common welfare of the Gild or town, shall have it made good to him. The liberties of the town shall be actively upheld whenever there is need. The Alderman shall control the Gild-house, and the Dean shall summon members to collect moneys. The goods of the Gild shall be put into hands of different folks to make increase and duly to restore the whole. Whoever discloses the affairs shall be put out of Gild. Two meetings every year. Wax lights to be found, and an account of them kept. Two accountants shall be chosen. A rent-roll shall be kept, showing charges and discharges. Muniments of title to be kept under seal. The chaplain to keep vestments, &c. Offerings shall be made in Pentecost week. Every new brother to pay to the Gild on entering *j*d., and to the doorkeeper *j*d. Fine for not attending meetings of the Gild.

The list of effects enumerated shows the Gild to have been a wealthy one.

Gild of the Smiths of Chesterfield.—This Gild had from the time of

its foundation (date not stated, but probably very ancient) down to 1387 had a separate existence; but the brethren having then found their funds too small to fulfil their claims, at this date joined the Gild of the Holy Cross of the Merchants of Chesterfield. Its leading features were: An Elder Father, Dean, Steward, and four Overseers were to manage affairs. Help to be given to the sick; also, "if any of them fall into poverty, they shall go, singly, on given days, to the houses of the bretheren, where each shall be courteously received, and there shall be given to him, as if he were the master of the house, whatever he wants of meat, drink, and clothing, and he shall have a halfpenny, like those who are sick; and then he shall go home in the name of the Lord." Lights to be set round the body of the dead. Whoever is wrongfully imprisoned shall be helped by the Gild. The brethren shall bequeath something to the Gilds; the goods of intestates to be held liable for moneys due to Gild. Moneys borrowed must be paid on day appointed. Rebellious brethren shall be heavily punished. Debtors and wrongdoers to be kept altogether aloof from the Gild. Oath to be made to keep these Ordinances.

In the return no patron saint was named; it seems, however, to have been under the patronage of the Holy Cross. Occasionally the Gild-Merchants had no patron saint.

Gild of the Holy Cross of Merchants of Chesterfield.—No details.

Devonshire.—I do not meet with so many traces of Gilds in this county as might have been expected from the number and importance of the towns it contains.

Exeter.—The Gilds of this ancient and pleasant city are possessed of much interest. There were probably many of which we now know nothing. I have already given the Ordinances of one under the Anglo-Saxon period (chapter xv.). Those we have now to notice were Craft-Gilds. It seems that these Gilds were in early conflict with the Church here, as will more particularly appear in our notice of the Tailors' Gild. It is also seen how the Gilds were falling under the control of the Municipal Corporations.

Gild of the Cordwainers, incorporated 1387—probably upon an earlier foundation.—The Gild applied to the Corporation of the

city to let them have some Ordinances, and the request was granted—the following being their purport :—

The Gild shall make search for all goods badly made, and the produce should go half to the city and half to the Gild. Those chosen for Master and not serving, to be fined ; as also those chosen as shop-holders, and those as journeyman's Wardens. Those summoned before Master and Wardens, and not appearing, to be fined. No craftsman shall keep a shop unless free of the city. No craftsman shall wear the livery of any lord or other gentleman. Fourpence shall be paid to the Gild-wax for every fresh workman taken on by a craftsman. No craftsman to take another man's servant. Penalty on every man not paying his share towards the Priest and the Chapel. Every master shall be answerable for his servants. All the powers of the Gild shall be surrendered to the Corporation every year, and a fine paid for the renewal of them. These Ordinances are enrolled in the records of the City.

Gild of the Tailors.—The history of this Gild is very remarkable. Its founders, or brethren at a later date, did not choose to submit to the arbitrary dictates of the Corporation, and besides paying to the city half the penalties imposed on its officers and others, pay a fine for the annual renewal of its powers (as the Cordwainers had done). They took up "swerdis and daggariis" rather ; and finally the dispute came to be referred to the King (Edw. IV.), wherein it was awarded that "the Master and Wardens shall make no order prejudiciall to the lyberties of the byshop and his churche, or to the Mayer and Citie." "The M^r and Wardens shall governe the mysterye w^{thin} the jurisdiction of the Citie onelye, and to reforme the defaultes of that mystery onelye." "No person to be admitted to the freedome of the citie in that crafte oneles it be furst testified by the M^r and Wardens unto the Mayer that he is an honest and a meete man," &c. &c. The Mayor and Council of the city held a wine-party to celebrate their triumph in the King's award. But the costs to the city attending the obtaining the award much lessened the effects of the supposed victory, if victory it were. Finally the Gild got a new set of Ordinances, but this not until some time later than we are now at.

The purport of the new Ordinances was as follows : The Master and Wardens shall meet regularly in the common-hall of the Gild to deal with the affairs of the Gild. Every full craftsman worth £20 shall belong to the Gild, and shall pay 12d. a year for the feast, and also pay for his livery within a month after Midsummer. He shall also give a silver spoon weighing an ounce, and made in the fashion. Craftsmen outside the livery shall pay 6d. a year. There shall be a feast on St. John's Day; every shop-holder paying 8d. towards it, and every servant at wages paying 6d.; other brethren 4d. Payments shall be made by free sewers [stitchers]. Whoever is employed for 15 days shall be made a free sewer; and his master shall pay his xxd. or find surety. Bonds shall be forfeited on non-payment of dues; but those fallen into poverty shall be released, and shall be helped. Penalties for using bad words; also for irregular trading out of the city. There shall be four regular Gild meetings—all being held on the "day of Thor." After the masters and shop-holders have dined, the sewers shall have the fragments of the feast. Every member shall spend something. No craftsman shall have more than three servants and one apprentice, unless he have licence. The indenture of every apprentice shall be enrolled. Every apprentice shall pay a silver spoon to the Gild, and shall give a breakfast when he becomes a freeman. Every one made free of the Craft by redemption shall pay 20s., and give a breakfast when made free of the City. The number of servants newly-made freemen shall have, defined. The form of oath to be taken by Craftsmen we have already given under "Oaths of Admission;" and there were oaths for all other officers, &c. A prayer was to be put up for the Gild, and the King, Queen, Princes, &c.; and for the King's Council; and for sundry good doers to the Gild.

Gild of the Bakers.—Date of origin uncertain. The Ordinances from which we quote were not granted by the Corporation of the city until 1483; and these were in substance as follows: An annual feast to be kept; a Master and two Wardens chosen, and accounts rendered yearly. All corn shall be ground at the city mills so long as those using flour can get enough thence. 12d. to be paid for every fresh workman taken on by craftsmen—half to city and half

to Gild, unless the man have been an apprentice to the craft. The Wardens with a city officer shall make search for all breaches of the law. Presentments to be made at the Mayor's Court with the goods forfeited. Searches to be made at hucksters' houses for bread made outside the town, such bread being forfeited. Horse-loaves to be made two for a penny of clean beans. No Baker to be allowed in the town unless a freeman, and also one of the Gild. Any article in these Ordinances contrary to the city liberties shall be reformed; and no city custom can be lessened by it. The Mayor's seal was put to these articles.



CHAPTER XXVI.

GILDS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

THE Gilds in this county have been varied in character. I shall notice such of them only as present some special feature. There is no trace of early origin.

Chipping Sodbury.—In the reign of Henry VI., which extended from 1423 to 1461, a Gild was founded in this borough, and endowed with lands. The last incumbent of the revenues of this Gild is recorded to have been John Glover, who received a pension of £4 per annum in 1553. The lands of the Gild were granted, 2 Edward VI. (1548), to Miles Patrick, who granted them the same year to Richard Pate, who also granted them, 5 Mary I. (1558), to the burghers of Sodbury, part for a town-hall, and part for an almshouse—purposes partly municipal, partly charitable.

An information was brought in the Exchequer, 14 Elizabeth (1572), for lands in Sodbury, called town-lands, formerly belonging to the dissolved Gild, which information was dismissed upon a full hearing.

In 1608 (5 James I.) the lands were again granted to William Herick and Arthur Ingram. Another information was brought in the Exchequer, 32 Charles II. (1680), supposing them to have belonged to the Monastery of Bradenstock; but that was likewise dismissed. (*Vide* Rudder's "Gloucestershire.")

Dyrham.—In 1520 Sir William Dennys and his lady, Anne, daughter of Maurice, Lord Berkeley, with some others, founded a Gild (in reality a Chantry) in the Church of Dyrham. The method of its foundation and the statutes for its regulation were the following :—

MEMORANDUM, In the year of our Lord, 1520, October the First, in the twelfth year of King Henry the Eighth, Sir William Dennys, knight, dame Anne, his wife, Robert Llen, parson of the church of Dyrham, Thomas Llen, and William Were, who were servants to the said Sir William and dame Anne, founded first a priest to sing mass daily within the parish church of Dyrham, within the chapel of St. Dennys, to pray for the founders of the said mass, and for all them that will become brothers and sisters, or anything helping for the maintenance of the said fraternity or Gild.

ITEM, The said priest shall, ere he begin his mass, pray in general for the good state of the founders, and brothers and sisters, and for all benefactors to the said Gild.

ITEM, The priest, at his coming to the savetory, shall say for the souls of the said founders, brethren and sisters, which be dead, *De Profundis*.

ITEM, The Proctor of the said Gild, for the time being, shall cause four solemn dirges and masses, according to note, to be sung at four times within the year; which times shall appear, following these words, *Let us pray*.

ITEM, The dirge and mass to be kept upon St. Dennys Eve, and the mass upon the day which shall be the ninth day of October.

ITEM, The second dirge and mass to be kept the eighth and ninth days of January.

ITEM, The third dirge and mass to be kept the twenty-ninth and thirtieth days of March.

ITEM, The fourth dirge and mass to be kept the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth days of June.

ITEM, The said priest, before he goeth to the quarter mass, shall pray for the state of the founders, brothers and sisters, and for the souls of them that be dead, generally or especially as he hath time.

ITEM, The proctor of the said Gild shall cause, at every quarter of the year, to be at the solemn mass, the parson of the church, or his

priest in his absence, with four other honest priests, to help to sing the dirge, and to sing mass on the morrow.

ITEM, The proctor of the said Gild shall, of the stock of the said Gild, pay every priest for his coming and for his devout doing 6d., and to the ringers 4d.

ITEM, Such persons as shall be named and chosen to be proctors of the said Gild, shall be every year named and chosen the first day of February.

ITEM, The said proctors shall make the account every year upon the first day of February.

ITEM, The said proctors shall make their account upon the said day, within the church of Dyrham, within the Trinity Chapel, and to lay down the money of their collection upon the altar there.

ITEM, The account shall be made before the lord of the lordship, or the lord's bayliff in his absence, the parson of the church, or his priest in his absence, and two of the elder brethren within the parish, and all the brethren within the said parish, if they will be at it.

ITEM, At the account, the old proctors, before they be discharged, shall name to the said Lord, or to his bayliff, the parson or his priest, such as shall take the account, six persons, of which six, the said lord or his bayliff, the parson or his priest, that taketh the accounts, shall name two to be collectors; and there, openly, the said lord or bayliff, parson or priest, which taketh the account, shall deliver the said money to the new proctors.

MEMORANDUM, That William Were hath given to St. Dennys Chapel a chalice of silver.

MEMORANDUM, That where Sir William Dennys, and dame Anne his wife, and Robert Llen, parson of the Church of Dyrham, Thomas Llen and William Were, having constituted and ordained a priest to sing dayly in St. Dennys Chapel, within the church of Dyrham, for the maintenance of the said priest, Sir William Dennys hath promised to give to the proctors and their successors of the Gild of St. Dennys, for the aforesaid maintenance of the said priest, sixteen kine.

ITEM, The said dame Anne, by the licence of the said Sir William, her husband, hath promised to give eight kine.

ITEM, Robert Llen, parson of the aforesaid church, hath promised to give one hundred sheep.

ITEM, Thomas Llen, fifty sheep.

ITEM, William Were, in oxen and kine, sixteen.

ITEM, There is let to John Ford, of Puclechurch, eight kine of St. Nicholas Stock, paying by the year for every cow 22*d*.

ITEM, In like manner let to Humphry Llen, of St. Nicholas Stock, four kine.

ITEM, To John Ward, of St. Nicholas Stock, four kine.

ITEM, The proctors of St. Dennys Gild shall pay quarterly to the priest that singeth in the said chapel, for his salary, 33*s*. 4*d*.

ITEM, The proctors shall receive the money for the payment of the said priest as followeth :—

Of sir William Dennys quarterly, 'till the said sixteen kine be delivered to the proctors of the said Gild for the time being	...	...	...	...	}	<i>s</i> . 6	<i>d</i> . 8
Of dame Anne Dennys	...	...	...	...
Of Mr. Robert Llen, parson of the said church	...	...	...	...		6	8
Of Thomas Llen	...	...	...	...		3	4
Of William Were	...	...	...	...		6	8
Of John Ford	...	...	...	...		3	4
Of Humphry Llen	...	...	...	...		1	8
Of John Ward	...	...	...	...		1	8

33 4

MEMORANDUM, The said priest shall find himself, for to sing at the said altar, bread, wine, and wax.

Many were the brethren and sisters of this Gild who were prevailed upon to contribute towards its maintenance, which persons lived in fifty several parishes at least, in Bristol, Bath, Somersetshire, and Gloucestershire, and might amount in number to 300 persons. The usual pay from each person was 1*od*. or 2*od*. quarterly. (*Vide* Rudder's "Gloucestershire.")

This Gild is referred to in Chapter IV.—Religious Gilds.

Gloucester.—That this ancient city had an early Merchants' Gild there seems no doubt. An early corporate seal has in its centre a

castle, with a turret on each side, and round these is the inscription "Sigillum burgensium de Gilda mercatorum Glouc." It also has had ancient charters, from the time of Edward the Confessor, but no mention of Gilds is made earlier than in the Charter of 1681, to be presently more particularly referred to. The Company of Clothiers—at one period a very famous industry in the City—with other Trading Companies, attended the Mayor on solemn occasions, of which there is record in 1629. The inference fairly is that the Trade Gilds of the City are of earlier origin than the Corporation itself.

There are indeed strong references to some of the Gilds or City Companies which support this view. Thus the *Weavers' Company*—which in the reign of Henry VII. were described as the Warden and Stewards of the Fraternity of St. Anne—continued proctors of St. Anne's service in St. Michael's Church till its dissolution; and were afterwards so very considerable, that when Thomas Machin was Mayor, 43rd of Elizabeth (1601), a writing or agreement in behalf of their journeymen was then made and approved by two justices of assize, at their being in this city. In addition there were formerly the Companies of *Cappers* and *Furriers*, Shearmen and Dyers, which became united 21st Elizabeth (1578), and in less than a century later (1634) were quite decayed. Of the *Cooks* and *Innholders*, which became united in 24th Elizabeth (1581), and with their Companies also attended the Mayor on solemn occasions as late as 1629. And of *Haberdashers* and *Brewers*.

By the Charter granted by Charles II. to the city in 1671, there is the following clause:—

"And we farther will and do, for us, our heirs and successors, by these presents, grant to the mayor and burgesses of the city aforesaid, and their successors, that no guild or fraternity within the city aforesaid, may have the power, authority, and jurisdiction of making, appointing, and constituting any statutes or constitutions whatsoever to oblige or bind any of the burgesses of the city aforesaid, or any one or more of any fraternity within the said city, unless they may and shall have power, authority, and licence to make such statutes, orders and constitutions, from the mayor, aldermen, and common council of the city aforesaid, under the common seal of the said

city, witnessing such licence, power, and authority : And that all and singular laws, orders, statutes, constitutions, and decrees whatsoever, made or to be made, by any fraternity or guild within the city aforesaid, without such power, authority, and licence, under the common seal of the city aforesaid, shall be void in law, and had and reputed of none effect ; any statute, act, order, or provision, or any matter or cause to the contrary notwithstanding."

In 1779 there were twelve Companies which attended, with their banners, upon the Mayor, on occasions of importance, viz.,

1. The *Mercers*, under which was also included the *Apothecaries*, *Grocers* and *Chandlers*.
2. *Weavers*, originally Fraternity of St. Anne.
3. *Tanners*.
4. *Butchers*.
5. *Bakers*.
6. *Smiths* and *Hammermen*, among which were included *Ironmongers*, *Cutlers*, *Saddlers*, and *Glaziers*.
7. *Foiners* and *Coopers*.
8. *Shoemakers*.
9. *Metal-men*, to which belonged *Goldsmiths*, *Braziers*, *Pewterers*, and *Pinmakers*.
10. *Tailors*.
11. *Barbers*.
12. *Glovers*.

The individuality of these Gilds has now become merged into the Corporation.



CHAPTER XXVII.

GILDS OF HAMPSHIRE.

THE Gilds of this county are of more especial interest, for here we have direct evidence of the existence of one in the Anglo-Saxon period—see *Winchester* "Gild Merchant," but unfortunately the ordinances of the Gild have not been preserved. We find also in the same city instances of Crafts becoming incorporated into

Gilds in order to protect them from outside traders, and learn in detail the process employed by means of the original Ordinances.

Portsmouth.—In 1256 Henry III. granted a new Charter to this borough wherein he gave *probis hominibus nostris*, “to our honest men of Portesmuth a Gild of Merchants.” Allen, in his “History of Portsmouth” (1817), says: “In all probability this town was now increasing considerably in trade and importance, for it was considered at this period a great privilege to have a *Gilda Mercatoria*, and indeed sometimes afforded a livelihood to a member or burgess of the Gild of Merchants; for wherever such a burgess resided he had many important privileges attached to the office and place of such community or fraternity.” I have not met with further details.

Southampton.—There was a Gild Merchant in this town from a very early date. It is believed that this Gild was mainly instrumental in purchasing the freedom of the town in 1199—hence it must then have held a position of influence. The Ordinances of the Gild are the most complete, as also the most extended in their scope, of any I have met with: hence I shall quote them in some detail.

Gild Merchant.—The Ordinances of this Gild, from which I shall cite, are those translated from the French by William Overey, afterwards Town Clerk, about the year 1473 (*vide* Davies, “History of Southampton”); but it requires to be understood that the Ordinances had been at various times previously amended. The Gild seems at an early period to have absorbed or overshadowed the more ancient borough or town rights. I shall only deal in abstract with most of the regulations.

The Gild was to have an Alderman, Seneschal, Chaplain, Echevins, and Usher. No one could gain admission to it except through an Alderman. During the Gild Session the Aldermen (as also the Lepers of La Maudeleyne) were to receive certain doles of wine and candles. No Gildsman was to leave the town during the Gild Session. The sick were to be visited, the service of the dead administered, by the Gild brethren. The Seneschal was to keep the records of the Gild. Then the following provision as to inheritance:—

9. When a Gildsman dies, his eldest-born son or his next heir

shall have the seat of his father, or of his uncle if his father was not a Gildsman, but of no other relation, and shall give nothing for his seat. But no husband (baron) by reason of his wife, can have a seat in the Gild, nor demand it by any right of his wife's ancestors.

10. No one has the right or power of [selling or] giving away his seat in the Gild. And the son of a Gildsman, other than his eldest, shall be admitted to the Gild on payment of 10s. and shall take the oath.

If a Gildsman was in prison in any place in England, in time of peace, the Alderman, with the seneschal and one of the echevins, should go at the cost of the Gild to procure (*porchaser*) his deliverance. If any Gildsman strike another with his fist and be thereof attainted he should lose his Gildship, but might regain the same for 10s. and a new oath. A stranger striking a Gildsman to lose his privileges of the Gild and go to prison for a day and night; a stranger not of the Gild so offending to be imprisoned two days and nights. A Gildsman reviling or aspersing another Gildsman to be fined 2s., or in default lose his Gildship. That no one of the Franchise [those admitted to corporate privileges on payment of a fine] should speak or do evil against a Gildsman on pain of 5s. fine or loss of franchise. None but Gildsmen to attend the Council. If any one of the Gild committed an act of trespass he should be excluded, but might be readmitted on discretion of the Alderman and the discreets (*prodeshomes*) by going through all the forms of membership *de novo*. "And if any one of the Gild, or any of the Franchise, sue another out of the town, by writ or without writ, he shall lose his Gildship and the franchise on proof thereof." (18) Then:

19. No one shall buy anything [in the town of Suthamtone] to sell again in the same town, except he be a Gildsman, or of the Franchise. And if anyone do so and be attainted thereof, all that he has so bought shall be forfeited to the King. And no one shall be quit of custom unless he have made it clear that he is of the Gild or of the Franchise, and this from year to year.

20. No one shall buy honey, seim, [viz., fat, lard, or fish-oil], salt herrings, oil, millstones, or hides except a Gildsman, nor keep a tavern for wine, or sell cloth by retail, except on market or fair day,

nor keep above five quarters of corn in his granary to sell by retail, if he be not a Gildsman ; and whoever shall do this and be attainted shall forfeit all to the King.

21. No one of the Gild shall be partner or joint dealer [*de partie maunder*] in any of the aforesaid merchandises with any person who is not of the Gild, by any manner of coverture, art, contrivance, collusion, or any other manner. And whoever shall do this and be attainted, the goods so bought shall be forfeited to the King, and the Gildsman shall lose his Gildship.

22. If any Gildsman fall into poverty and have not wherewith to live, and cannot work and provide for himself, he shall have one mark from the Gild to relieve his condition when the Gild shall be held. No one of the Gild or Franchise shall avow another's goods for his own, by which the custom of the town may be injured. And if anyone do so, and he be attainted, he shall lose the Gildship and the Franchise, and the merchandise so avowed shall be forfeited to the King.

23. And no denizen or stranger shall [bargain for] or buy merchandise [coming into the town] before a burgess of the Gild Merchant, so long as the Gildsman is present and desires to bargain for or buy those goods ; and if any do, and be attainted, all that he has bought shall be forfeited to the King.

24. And any one of the Gild Merchant shall share (*deit partir*) in all merchandise which another Gildsman or any other person shall buy, if he comes and demands part, and is on the spot where the merchandise is bought, so that he satisfy the seller and give security for his own part (*quy il soit en seur del seon*). But no man who is not of the Gild can or ought to claim share with a Gildsman against his will.

25. . . . And if any Gildsman, or other of the town, refuse a part as aforesaid to a Gildsman, he shall neither buy nor sell in the town that year, except victuals.

26. And if any merchant of the town buy wine or corn, so that all the risk be on the buyer, he shall pay no custom for those goods ; but if any part of the risk be on the seller, he shall pay.

27. It is provided that the chief Alderman of the town, with the

Bailiffs and the twelve sworn men [assistants of the Mayor—approved men, *prodeshomes*] shall be watchful over the merchants, as well strangers as denizens, as often as shall be required, to see that they have sufficient security for their debts, and of the recognizance of their debtors, &c., &c.

28. And if a Gildsman will not suffer himself to be distrained for debt or [being distrained shall break through, or make removal or] break the King's lock, and be thereof attainted, he shall lose his Gildship until he has bought it again for 20s., and that each time he offends in such manner. And he shall not at all be the less distrained until he has made satisfaction of the debt he owes, &c. &c.

Then it is provided that the Assize of Bread and Ale shall be held rightfully in all points, according to the price of corn.

30. That no man of the town sell merchandise of a merchant [stranger] bought under pretence, whereby the merchandise would be sold for more than the merchant could have sold it by his own hand, and so the town's people would lose their profit; but the merchants who bring their goods for sale shall sell them by their own hand. And he who shall do this, and be thereof attainted, shall lose his Gildship, if he be a Gildsman; and if he be of the Franchise, he shall lose his Franchise until he has made amends to the town for his offence.

The Market for fish and meat and poultry to be held in all points. And every on the morrow of St. Michael should be chosen two discreets who should be sworn to take care that the Statutes made concerning the Fish Market be observed in all points, and they should have the several points in writing. In the same manner there should be two discreets elected and sworn to take care that the Statutes concerning meat and poultry be observed at all points. And these four sworn men were to take care that the Statutes concerning bread brought to market from out of town be well observed; and if any do otherwise, notice shall be given to the Chief Alderman and the Bailiffs.

Twelve discreets were to be elected to maintain the King's peace, and no Bailiff was to give respite or take pledge for the Custom, nor give credit for the same. Every entry of a ship and of consumable

goods, and every export from the town by sea, was to be enrolled. That the common chest be in the house of the Chief Alderman or of the Seneschal. It was ordained that the Bailiffs should have nothing from any article which belongs to the Custom as of forfeiture ; but they might have one billet from every cart of firewood brought into the town for sale, on payment of 1d.

Those who had committed offences against the Aldermen should be amerced at the award of the discreets. Those who were summoned to the Court of the King, or to the Assembly, should be amerced.

39. That no man harbour hay, oats, or other corn, after that these goods are brought for sale into this market, on pain of forfeiture of the same.

40. No merchant stranger who has hired a house or cellar in the town may or can harbour any merchandise not his own in that house or cellar, by any manner of pretext, by which the rents of houses belonging to any burgher of the town would be lessened ; under fine, at the discretion of the authorities.

No butcher or cook to sell other than nice-looking and clean food, under penalty, and no butcher or cook to throw into the street any filth or other matter. And no man should have before his house muck or dung, or pigs going about. The twelve sworn men were to be attentive in all points to the bailiffs of the town. The Aldermen and Guardians of the streets of the town were to see that the ordinances be well kept. Two Aldermen should keep the peace within the boundaries. The Watches of the town were to be wisely appointed, and kept in all particulars. Districts were defined for the several Aldermen.

52. No fisherman, for the future, that brings fish to the town in a ship or great boat shall unload or sell his fish before he has the Bailiff's leave ; and he that does so and is attainted shall be grievously punished. And this must be understood to extend to salted fish. The same is ordained for all other merchandise.

The Aldermen were to be chief (cheveteyn) of the town, and of the Gild in the town ; and if the Bailiff or other official of the town offend and do not right, the Aldermen and authorities to

correct this offence. The committee might be assembled for business as often as necessary. In case of contention arising between the burgesses in the town, they to make amends before the discreets, or in default be dealt with according to the ordinances. If anyone not an inhabitant of the town be by the favour of the discreets admitted into the Gild, his heir could not in his father's right enjoy any benefit of that favour of the Gild. If two men of the Gild bear witness on oath to an offence committed against the statutes, and contrary to the Franchise of this town, their testimony shall stand and be believed, and if those who so bear witness be reasonably attainted of having borne witness falsely, those who have uttered such testimony shall lose their Gildship, according to the ordinances.

59. No broker shall bring any merchant, denizen, or stranger to buy any goods if the purchaser be not a sufficient man, and both willing and able fully to pay and satisfy the seller, under pain aforesaid.

60. No broker shall store the merchandise of strange folk or their goods on the penalty aforesaid, and brokers are bound by their oath to inform the Alderman if a stranger buys and sells again within the town.

61. If anyone of the town buys a ship-load of wine or corn in the gross, and a burgess of the town desires to have a tun of wine or two or three quarters of corn for his own use, he shall have it at the price for which it was bought any time while the purchased goods remain in the seller's hands.

62. If anyone of the town buy wine or other customable merchandise between Hurst and Langston, he shall pay the custom and prisage if the goods be purchased of a man liable to pay.

63. No one shall go out to meet a ship bringing wine or other merchandise coming to the town, in order to buy anything before the ship be arrived, and come to anchor for unloading; and if any one does so, and be attainted, the merchandise which he shall have bought shall be forfeited to the King.

64. It is provided by common consent of the Gild that no one shall sell any fresh fish, either in the market or street, but the person who has caught it in the water, or shall have bought it without

Calshot. And those who bring fish in or about shall bring it all into the market at once ; and if they conceal any part of the fish in their boat, they shall lose all ; and if the fisherman deliver any part of the fish for sale by another than himself, he shall lose all ; and if any huxter woman buy fish to sell it again, she shall lose all.

65. No one shall buy fish before sunrise or after sunset, and if anyone do so and be thereof attainted, if he be a Gildsman he shall lose his Gildship, and if he be of the Franchise, he shall lose his Franchise and suffer imprisonment a day and a night.

66. No one from Millbrook or elsewhere shall bring fish from beyond into the town of Southampton, without asking leave, and without paying customs, &c.

67. No butcher or other person shall sell the hide upon a beast elsewhere than in the town ; and no one shall dress hides or dry skins if he be not a Gildsman. The same is to be observed of the hides of horses, pigs, and other hides, and fresh skins of sheep, wethers, and goats.

68. Every person who brings bread in a cart to sell, shall sell that bread by his own hand and by no other ; and if any of such bread be put in the hand of others, it shall be lost.

69. No Gildsman shall go on to the water to meet fish coming to the town in order to buy it, and if anyone does so, and buys it before the ship has arrived and come to anchor, he shall lose his Gildship. And if any other who is not a Gildsman be attainted of going to meet fish and buying it before the ship has arrived and is at anchor, if he be of the Franchise he shall go to prison a day and a night ; and if a stranger who is not of the Franchise does so, he shall lose all that he has bought.

70. No regrator of kids, lambs, birds, geese, capons and hens, chicken, or any other kind of victual of cheese, fresh butter, eggs, shall buy any kind of victuals to sell again before the hour of prime [6 o'clock a.m.] sounds, nor before the discreets of the town and other freemen of the country have bought their eatables. And no regrator shall go out of the town to meet any victuals coming to town to buy such ; and he who does so, and is thereof attainted, shall lose what he shall have thus bought.

It was provided that the Porters of Suthamtone should take $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. for lodging a cask of wine in cellars upon the sea-shore, &c., &c. There should be no Broker in the town, unless appointed by the discreets. If any man performed the office of broker without having been sworn to it, he should not recover his emoluments, and should be forbidden the office, &c. "And the brokers shall endeavour in all kinds of merchandise, to the best of their power and on their oath, to advance the interests of the burgesses of the town in all manner of purchases and sales, before all other merchants, in such manner that the profit of the burgesses of the town be made before any strange merchant is provided with goods; and they shall not show or cause to be shown, or give notice to any strange merchant of any kind of merchandise before the burgesses of the town are provided with it, and have refused or purchased [from] it."

No sworn broker should be both merchant and broker. No burgess or other person shall buy or sell fundrible of seim ("blobb," or impure fat), &c., &c. The Gildsmen should come at the hour of prime the morrow after the Gild begins, or be fined.

77. It is provided by common consent of the Gild that salt herrings coming to the port of Suthamton, by whomsoever brought, shall be sold in every ship at the highest price at first, according as they intend to make their profit, so that after the first price is set neither the master of the ship nor their hosts [the owners of the fish] shall increase the price above the first sale; and whosoever does this, and thereof is attainted, all that increased price shall be forfeited to the common profit of the town without contradiction.

These laws afford many points for the consideration not only of social economists, but also for the general students of history.

Winchester.—The Gilds of this City will be found full of interest, while the operations of some of them in the direction of restriction instead of advancement of trade cannot be gainsaid.

Merchant Gild.—In this City we find a Gild of the Anglo-Saxon period—one of the earliest, if not the earliest, which I have met with. In A.D. 856 (reign of Ethelred) the trade and commerce of this city are recorded to have been so flourishing that the principal citizens formed themselves into a Gild of merchants under the

protection of the King. Details of the constitution of the Gild I do not find.

In 1043, on the restoration of the Saxon line by Edward III. ascending the throne—being crowned in this city—trade began to revive, and it is believed that Gilds became more general. All the lesser fraternities, such as those of tailors, corvesers (curriers) the mystery of tapeners (weavers who regulated the width of cloth) or the mystery of burillers (weavers of woollen cloths called “burrels”) were probably included in the Gild Merchant. They certainly were at a later date. It is more than probable that about this date the Guild-hall (formerly in Colebrook-street) was erected.

In 1155 Henry II. granted a new Charter to this city, wherein he ordered that throughout the King’s dominions “my citizens of Winchester, of the Guild of Merchants, be free from all toll, passage duty and custom, and that none presume to disturb them in these things or do them any injury or insult.” These grants of freedom from tolls, &c., were by no means unusual, but they led, as of course, to many jealousies and misunderstandings. In 1189 Richard Cœur de Lion ascended the throne, and he in the following year granted a Charter to the Gild Merchant. By it the privileges of the Charter of Henry II. were reassured to the citizens and new ones given, viz., exempting them from the obligation of pleading without their own walls, and from trial by duel, and declaring them free at all times and in all places *both at home and abroad*, from lastage, pontage, and from all amercements except according to their ancient law.

In 1671 the following entry appears in the city archives: “A rate made and agreed upon by y^e Mayor, a Alderman of this said citty, upon the several persons hereund^r named, for using their trades with^a y^e said citty, not being free of y^e Guild of Merchants there, time out of minde and beyond the memory of man had and used within y^e same citty, and termed Artificer’s mony, for one whole yeare, to Comence from y^e Feast of St. Michael tharchangell last past, 1671, yeoven this Twenty-sixth day of January, 1671.” The fees charged in eighty-nine enumerated cases varied from 3s. 4d. (in two cases only) down to 6d. (in many instances)—2s. or 2s. 6d. being a very usual charge.

The latest record I find concerning this Gild is in 1705, when Prince George of Denmark was made a Freeman of the City and a member of the Gild of Merchants.

Fullers and Weavers' Gilds.—In 1149 the fullers and weavers were incorporated into Gilds; and about 1149 they obtained an extension of their privileges. The details of the respective schemes are not available.

Traders' Licences.—Although the Gilds were supposed to include the various craftsmen of the city, as a matter of fact there were many who did not so belong. In respect of these "outside" or non-freeman traders, the Corporation charged an annual tax or licence, varying probably in different years, or in respect of different trades. In the case of foreigners, the fine was probably for permission to reside within the city. I will quote one or two instances, beyond those already given in my notice of the *Gild Merchant*. Thus in the city archives under date May 9, 1673: "More paid in by Mr. Rt. Hobbs, for Licence to live and be an inhabitant in this city, £5, to be disposed of for Buckets to the City." The last charge made for exercising any trade or mystery in the city bears date April 12, 1728. "Also agreed that it be proposed at and to the same next assembly, That William Clarke shall and may be permitted and allowed to use, exercise, and occupy the Trade and manual occupation of a Barber within this city, he paying a Fine or Composition for such his permission and allowance the sum of £1 1s. into the Coffer of this City.—Thomas Barefoot, Mayor," &c. &c.

Tailors and Hosiers' Gild.—This Gild, which had received a grant of incorporation from this city, at an earlier period, but which appears to have proved ineffective for the preservation of the Crafts, received a fresh grant of incorporation, under date September 19, 1580 (reign of Elizabeth), as follows:—

"To all trewe faithful people to whom this present writing shall come. Richard Cooke, Gentleman, Mayor of the City of Winchester, in the County of Southampton; John Paice and James Hibert, Bailiffs; and the commonalty of the same City, send greeting in our Lord God everlasting. Forasmuch as we have heard the complaint of our loving neighbours the Taylers and Hosiers of the said

City, and yet daily do at divers quick times of work, and against high feasts, come and take houses within the said City, and do set up, use and occupy the crafts, mysteries, and occupations of Taylers and Hosiers; and that divers others likewise coming to the said City do use to work and occupy the same crafts and occupations in closets, in Inns, Alehouses, and other secret places within the same City, and after such quick times of work and high feasts do depart from this said City, to the great hinderance and utter undoing of our said neighbours and contrary to this Ordinance and grant made unto the said Taylors and Hosiers by Giles White, sometime Mayor of the City aforesaid, Lancelot Jonson, and John Symonds, then Bailiff, and the Commonalty of the same City: for reformation whereof, for making, setting forth and establishing of some good and laudable orders amongst the said Taylors and Hosiers, for their better maintenance, and for the common and public utility and weal of the said city, We the said Mayor, Bailiffs, and Commonalty, at this our Common Assembly, holden at the said City the 19th day of September, in the 22d year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady, the Queen's Majesty, underwritten, do by these presents order, grant, and agree, that the said Grant and Ordinance made unto the said Taylers and Hosiers in the time of the said Giles White, then Mayor of the said City, and every clause, sentence, and article therein contained, shall be from henceforth repealed, revoked, void, frustrate, and of none effect, to all intents and purposes. And now, we the said Mayor, Bailiffs and Commonalty, at our said Assembly, do by our assent and consent grant, order, ordain, establish and agree by these presents, for us and our Successors, that Tristame Budd, Stephen Browne, John Gifford, Richard Paice, William Woodward, Adam Vanderplanke, Anthony Colman, William Pannell, Edward Cosier, Robert Hilson, Thomas Vanderplanke, Richard Ruston, John Austen, and Thomas Mason, Taylors and Hosiers, within the said City and their successors, shall be incorporate and an Incorporation and Company of Taylors and Hosiers within the said City of Winchester. And that the Corporation and Company of Taylors and Hosiers under the conditions following, shall have always and for ever continuance within the City aforesaid: And that it shall be lawful for the Corporation and

Company of Taylors and Hosiers every year to elect and choose, of and amongst themselves, two persons to be Wardens of the Company, and that the Wardens of the said Company for the time being shall be accounted for that year the chiefest of that Company."

The Wardens were to be elected before the first Boroughmote to be holden within the said city next after the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, and sworn before the Mayor of the said city for the time being, or his Deputy, well, truly, and indifferently to make searches of the offenders contrary to this Ordinance, and to present truly all offenders, offences, and defaults which they should find contrary to any article herein contained. They were to levy and gather all fines, &c., and make account and payment thereof unto the Chamberlain at his audit. They were also to pay to the Town Clerk 8d. for entering their names.

The Wardens had power to admit others into the said Company; and also any person that was apprenticed to the occupation of tailor within the said city, at the expiration of his apprenticeship, on his paying 3s. 4d. for his admittance. Any other person being admitted was to pay £5, and should be presented, registered, and entered at the next General Court to be holden within the city, and sworn to observe and keep all the orders, &c., contained in this Ordinance, and pay 2s. for his admission.

No other person was allowed to set up and carry on the said trades other than as a servant under one of the said Corporation, unless admitted as aforesaid, under a penalty of 10s. for *every week* during which he should so carry it on. Any journeyman retained by the Corporation was to pay 6d. within 14 days, and should not depart from the service without licence; and any member of the Corporation employing such journeyman who had absented himself, or who should entice away any servant or apprentice of any of the said Corporation, was subject to a fine of 20s. Whoever instructed any person or persons in the said trades who was not an apprentice according to the form of the said statute was to pay £1 6s. 8d. for every such offence. Every person of the said Corporation who should work or open his shop window or windows on any Sunday or other high festival, should lose and pay for every such offence 3s. 4d.

Any member of the said Corporation who should through negligence of himself or servants spoil any garment or apparel committed to him to be made, was to amend the same, or make recompense to the owner thereof, or else be dismissed from the Corporation until he had made sufficient recompense accordingly; and the Warden was not to allow any such person so dismissed to carry on the said trades until he had made recompense to such owner, upon pain of the said Warden forfeiting £4 to the said Corporation.

The Wardens had the power of calling the said Corporation together for the election of their Wardens, or for any other necessary matter, as often as they should think necessary; and any member of the said Corporation who should be absent at any such meeting, after due notice given to him thereof, without a sufficient excuse, should forfeit for every such time 3s. 4d.

The Wardens had likewise the power of entering into the houses or shops of any member of the said Corporation for any cause concerning the same; and if a complaint was made to them against any member thereof concerning the said trades, they were to use their best endeavours that the person complaining should have redress, and the said Wardens neglecting or refusing so to do should lose and pay for their negligence therein 6s. 8d. Also, that no person offending in any point contrary to this Ordinance, after the same offence, open his shop windows, or use or exercise his craft or science within the said City, until he had paid the fine, &c., to which he was liable, upon pain that every person so offending should forfeit 12d. for every day on which he should so open his windows, or exercise his craft or science. Also that it should be lawful for the said Wardens, as often as any default should be made by any person, or any fine, &c., due from any person, to distrain for the same, and make sale of the goods, &c., distrained, within 21 days after their being appraised; the Mayor's sergeant to have 8d. for every distress out of the said fines. Any freeman of the City obstructing the Wardens in their duty in making distress, &c., was to be disfranchised; and every other person so offending and not being free of the said City should forfeit 40s., to be levied by distress. If any bailiff, constable, or sergeant refuse to aid the Wardens in making

any distress, he was to be fined 20s., to be levied in like manner.

It should also be lawful for the said Wardens and Corporation to make further orders for their better government. Any doubt as to the construction or interpretation of the said Ordinance was to be determined by the Mayor and the major part of his brethren; and they had also the power to amend, alter, or revoke the same. Anything contained in the said Ordinance, if contrary to any statute of the realm, was to be of no effect. The Common Seal was affixed.

Shoemakers and Cobblers' Gild.—This Gild became incorporated by the Corporation of the City, under date, and in form, and for the reasons following :—

“*Sept.* 19, 1580. To all trewe faithful people to whom these presents shall come. Richard Cook, Gentleman, Maior of the City of Winchester, in the County of Southampton; John Paice and James Hibert, Bailiffs; and the Commonalty of the same City, send Greeting in our Lord God everlasting. Forasmuch as earnest and pitiful complaints have been made unto us by the Shoemakers and Cobblers of this City of Winchester for sundry abuses and enormities of late years sprung up and suffered, as well amongst themselves as also and most specially for that divers and sundry persons by colour of Freedom of the said City, have lately set up and do use the trades, sciences, and mysteries of Shoemakers and Cobblers, not having been apprentice themselves, nor using the same at the time of the making of the Statute made in the 5th year of the Queen's Majesty's Reign, that now is, contrarie to the tenor and effect thereof, by reason thereof many inconveniences have ensued, namlie, for that those persons so unlawfully setting up the said Trades, sciences, and mysteries not practised therein, do for the most part, either ignorantly or for wicked lucre and gain's sake, utter and sell to the People booted Shoes, Slippers and Pantaples, made of faulty, deceitful, and evil tanned leather, to the great hurt and deceit of the people; and for that also, by their daily repair to the said City, the number of Shoemakers and Cobblers are greatly increased, and thereby their Trade and utterance much diminished; and therefore not able as in time past to bear and sustain the great charges, taxes,

and payments of the said City for their parts laid upon them, except some speedy remedy be therein provided : for reformation whereof, and for making, setting forth, and establishing of some good and laudable orders amongst the said Shoemakers and Cobblers for the better maintenance of those necessary Trades, sciences, and mysteries. That it shall not be lawful for any Shoemaker of the said Corporation now admitted, or hereinafter to be admitted at any time from henceforth, to clout, pin, or sole for any person or persons other than for himself or his Family, any old Shoes, Boots, Buskins, Slippers, Skertoppes or Pantaples, upon pain that every such Shoemaker shall forfeit and lose for every such Shoe, Boot, Buskin, Slipper, Skertoppe, or Pantaple, to be by him or his Servant, or Servants, clouted, pierced, or soled, upon due proof thereof by one or more sufficient witness or witnesses, 3s. 4d. to be levied by Distress by the said Wardens, or one of them ; the one moiety thereof to be to the said Corporation and the other moiety to the Chamber of the said City.

“And that no Cobler now admitted, or hereafter to be admitted to the said Corporation, shall make, sell, or utter, or cause to be made, sold, or uttered, any new Shoes, Boots, Buskins, Skertoppes, Slippers or Pantaples upon pain to lose for every pair of new Shoes, Boots, Buskins, Slippers, Skertoppes or Pantaples so by him made, sold, or uttered, or caused to be made, sold, or uttered, 6s. 8d. of lawful money of England ; the one moiety thereof unto the said Corporation, and the other moiety to the Chamber of the said City, to be levied by Distress as aforesaid, to the common utility and public weal of the said City.

“We, the said Mayor, Bailiffs, and Commonalty, at this our Common Assembly holden at the said City the fourth day of August, in the two and twentieth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth, do by our one assent and consent grant, order, establish, and agree by these presents, for us and our successors, that Anthony Birde, Stephen Knight, Thomas Martyn, Henry Lawkyn, Michael Crophe, William Bearbain, John Davies, John Burte, William Goodale, and William Lawrence, Shoemakers within the said City, and their successors : And Leonarde Burte, Thomas Pilgrim, Thomas Flux,

George Bowlton, John Blyset and Thomas Orcharde, Coblers within the said Citie, and their successors shall be incorporate and an Incorporation or Company of Shoemakers and Coblers within the said City of Winchester: And that the Incorporation of Shoemakers and Coblers, under the conditions following shall have always for ever continance within the City aforesaid. And that it shall be lawful for the Corporation and Company of Shoemakers and Coblers every year to elect and choose of and amongst themselves two persons to be Wardens of that Company, and that the Wardens of the said Company for the time being shall be accounted for that year the chiefest of that Company.

Gild Fair.—There was a “Gild Fair” held in this City from early times. The “usages” of the City, promulgated about 1350, makes special mention of the fact, and lays down regulations for the proper accommodation of the merchants attending. This seems to have been a fair held in the City; but it may have given rise to, or merged into, St. Giles’ Fair.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

GILDS OF HEREFORDSHIRE.

HEREFORDSHIRE.—This county does not appear to have been at all rich in Gilds, although it is probable that in this as in most other counties there were some, the records of which have not been preserved in form for detailed reference.

Hereford.—There was an ancient Gild of Cordwainers in the city which occupied a prominent position at one period. I do not know that any point in its history calls for special comment here. It became one of the City Companies. As such its history has been written by Mr. J. D. Devlin (1848).

Ludlow.—This ancient town had a Gild with some special features.

Gild of the Palmers, established 1284, or earlier.—“When it happens that any of the bretheren or sisteren of the Gild shall

have been brought to such want, through *theft, fire, shipwreck, fall of a house*, or any other mishap, that they have not enough to live on; then once, twice, and thrice, but not a fourth time, as much help shall be given to them out of the goods of the Gild, as the Rector and Stewards, having regard to the deserts of each, and to the means of the Gild, shall order; *so that whoever bears the name of this Gild shall be up-raised again*, through the ordinances, goods, and help of his bretheren." If a member be wrongfully thrown into prison, or his goods taken, no pains shall be spared to free both, at the cost of the Gild if necessary. In case of sickness, help to be given out of the common fund of the Gild, till well again; or in case one becomes a *leper*, or *blind*, or maimed in limb, or smitten with any incurable disorder, the goods of the Gild to be largely bestowed upon them. "If any good girl of the Gild, of marriageable age, cannot have the means found by her father, either to go into a religious house or to marry, whichever she wishes to do; friendly and right help shall be given her, out of our means and our common chest, towards enabling her to do whichever of the two she wishes." Services for the dead shall be attended. "If any man wishes, as is common, to keep night-watches with the dead, this will be allowed, *on the condition that he neither calls up ghosts*, nor makes any mockeries of the body or its good name, nor does any other scandal of the kind; lest by such scandals the discipline of the Church may be brought into contempt, and the great Judge may be provoked to heavier vengeance, who ought rather, by reason of the sins of the people, to be asked for love and mercy. And never shall any woman, unless of the household of the dead, keep such a night-watch." The Rector and Stewards of the Gild to be chosen by picked men. Endowments made before A.D. 1279 confirmed.

This Gild appears to have had a Charter granted to it by Edward III. in or about 1329. Mr. Wright, in his "History of Ludlow" (1852, p. 206), says: "One of the main objects of this Gild was to provide by association and from a common fund for the protection of the members when robbed or oppressed by others; and it may therefore have been supposed to have had its origin amid the personal insecurity occasioned by the continued troubles on the Welsh border."

This hardly seems to present an entirely accurate view. But the later Charters of Edward, in 1344 and 1357, may have given it this complexion.

At the period of the Dissolution of the Monasteries the Gild appears to have made a struggle for existence, on the ground of its general utility. But the movement finally took the shape of merging the Gild property into the Corporation of the Town, as was permitted in some other cases. The petition of the Town, 1551, recites very fully the former usefulness of the Gild, and other points in its history as follows :—

“TO THE KINGES MOST ROYALL MAJESTIE.

“Moost humbly shewen and besechen your highnes, your true and faithfull subjectess, the bailiffes, burgenses, and commons of your majesties towne of Ludlowe, in the com. of Salop, that where A^o Domini 1284, certain burgenses of the said towne being welthy and of good substaunce, devised and agreed to erect and establishe a guylde to have contynuaunce for ever, for the purposes hereafter mencioned, and gave landes unto it for mayntenaunce of the same, viz., to releve the necessitie of such as by fire, by shipwracke, by violence of theves, or other unevitable misfortune, shuld fall in decay, to helpe also the necessitie of prisoners, poore maydens wanting sub stance to preferre theym to marriage, and suche as shulde by Goddes visitacion fall into incurable diseases, and lastly to sustayne thre priestes, eche of them at the wages of viijth markes by yere, as by their fundacion therof redy to be shewed at large doth appere; whiche said fundacion or gylde was afterwarde augmented, confirmed and incorporated by your majesties most renowned progeni- toures, Ed. the thirde, Ric. the second, and lastly, by your highnes’ moost worthy father of famous Kinge Henry theight, and was newe of late, in the first session of Parliament, holden in the begynnyng of your majesties reigne, forprised and excepted to be noon of those that by vertue of the Statute for suppression of colleges, chauntries, and guylde, or of any other Statute hetherunto made and came or ought to cumme to the handes and possession of your highnes; yet for so muche as some question hath been made in whom the right title

remayneth, and that after examynacion therof and deliberate consulation therein by the Chauncelour and counsaile of your highnes Court of Augmentaciones, the matter was lefte in suspence to be considered and ordered by your majesties moost honorable privey counsell, your said oratours knowing your highnes moost godly inclinacion to the advauncement and fatheraunce of all charitable and good publique ordinaunces, and withall considering that the whole and entier profits of the said guyld, except only xxij^{li} ix^s bestowed upon the fyndeng of priestes and obites for the dead, is yet and alwaies hitherunto hathe been employed and spent upon the sustentacion of xxx^{li} poore and impotent persones, the stipende of a scolemaister frely to teache and instructe youthe in the Latyne tunge, and suche like necessary uses, which your highnes by speciall wordes in the Statute appoynted to have contynuaunce as before, rather with more encrease and larger allowance than any abatement or decrease therof; moost humbly prayen and besechen your highnes to take the whole revenue of the said guyld into your majesties handes, and for that the said towne is large and hathe but oon parishe churche for iij^{mi} persones, and therein no vicar endowed, wherunto also from tyme to tyme is great accesse of straungiers owt of all the principallitie of Wales and Marches of the same, by occasion that the Commissioners resident in those parties for the good government of the cuntrey moost commonly make their abode in the castell there, and considering also that their fee ferme is decaied iij^{li} by yere at your majesties hands for burgage rentes, heretofore paied out of the religious howses dissolved, and that they stand charged nevertheless with mayntenaunce of the town wallss, the pavement, conduytes, and thre stone bridges, that therfore your majestie will vouchesauf to convert the rentes heretofore employed upon the superstitious abuses of private masses, obits, and suche like, to the mayntenaunce of a prechour, an assistant to the person in the cure, and the stipende of an ussher in the grammer schole, and therupon to annexe the whole landes and revenue aforesaid to their fee ferme of the towne; and they shall pray,) &c.

A Charter was granted by Edward VI., under date 26th April, 1552, to this town of the property of the Gild, in accordance with the

prayer of the petition, and that being confirmed in subsequent reigns, still stands in force.

The records of this Gild are still preserved.



CHAPTER XXIX.

GILDS OF KENT.

THE Gilds of this county were probably numerous at an early period; but their records do not furnish many details of special interest. There is, however, the Trinity House Gild of Deptford, whose history presents features of novelty.

Canterbury.—In this ancient city we meet with a Fraternity of Parish Clerks, which we had supposed not to have existed out of London.

St. Nicholas Gild.—William Somner, in his “Most Accurate History of the Ancient City and Famous Cathedral of Canterbury,” &c., 1661, says: “At this place [Westgate Ward] the Parish Clerks of the City had and held a Gild or Fraternity, commonly called the Fraternity of St. Nicholas. I have my direction for this from the following legacy of one Richard Cram, some time of this city, who, by his will, dated 1490, gave to the Fraternity of St. Nicholas, kept by the Parish Clerks of Canterbury, in the House of the Fryars, Preachers of Cant., vj. viiid., as his very words are.”

Other Gilds.—“Of these Fraternities,” says the same author, “our city hath had divers; amongst which that of the *Smiths*, newly revived, is the most ancient. The elder Rentalls of Christ Church, bounding out some land of theirs lying without Newingate, make mention both of it and of certaine ground belonging to it, in these words, ‘Terra quæ pertinet ad gildam fabrorum’ ” (p. 108).

Religious Gild.—There was in 1388, as is clear by the return then made in response to the writ of Richard II., at least one Religious Gild in this city. (I should have expected many more.) This has been regarded as the only return from the county whose existence is known. It seems to me to bear internal evidence that there were others.—

“Certificate of the foundation, rules, and present state of the Fraternity of St. John, in the Church of St. John, at Canterbury, made in the Chancery of the Lord the King, by William Bale and Robert Benneyt, Masters of the said Fraternity, on the Vigil of the Purification of the Blessed Mary, in the twelfth year of the reign of King Richard II. (Feb. 1, 1389), according to the form of his Proclamation by Letters Patent in manner following :

“ There is also [*‘ Est autem,’* implying others] a certain Fraternity in this Church of St. John, at Canterbury, which was founded about eight years ago, to the honour of the aforesaid Saint, by the devotion of certain men of that city, and is now continued under this form. That is to say—that the brethren and sisters of the said Fraternity shall assemble on the day of the said Saint, in this church aforesaid, and shall hear the Mass of the day, and shall offer what they are willing, and shall provide certain wax candles to burn before the image of the said Saint on all festival days. They shall have in the said church, at their own cost, a certain chaplain to celebrate before them on the said Saint’s day, when they shall wear cassocks, and also at a certain place within the parish they shall eat together. They have no other obligation ; and no more goods and chattels, or lands, tenements, rents, or possessions, in mortmain, or out of mortmain, belong to the said Fraternity than is above expressed.”

Deptford.—In this town, famous in the early annals of the navigation of the Thames, and probably well known to the Danish invaders, there sprang up a Gild of great mercantile importance.

Trinity House Gild.—This is one of the most useful, although certainly not one of the most ancient, Gilds of Kent. It is said to have been founded by Sir Thomas Spert in 1512, as an “ Association for Piloting of Ships ; ” but this was probably upon some older foundation of a Mariners’ or Shipping Fraternity.

The Society was incorporated by Henry VIII. in 1515, who confirmed to them not only all the ancient rights and privileges of the Mariners of England, but also their several possessions.

In 1566 there was enacted the 8 Elizabeth c. 13—“ An Acte touchinge Sea-markes and Maryners ”—which recited :

“ Whereas the Mayster Wardens and Assistauntes of the Trinytie

Howse of Deptforde Stronde, being a Company of the chiefest and moost experte Maysters and Governours of Shippes incorporat within themselves charged with the conduction of this Quenes Majesties Navye Royall, are bounde to forsee the Good Encrease and Mayntenaunce of Shypps and of all kinde of Men traded and brought upp by Water Crafte, most meete for Her Majesties Marine Service; And Forasmuch as by the dystroyeng and taking awaye of certaine Steeples, Woods, and other Markes standing upon the mayne Shores adjoiningg to the Sea Costes of thys Realme of England and Wales, being as Beakons and Markes of annycient-tyme accustomed for seafaring men to save and kepe them and the Shippes in their Charge from Sundry Daungers thereto incident, divers Shippes with their Goodes and marchandizes in sailing from forrayne Partes towards this Realme of Englande and Wales, and specially to the Porte and Ryver of Thames, have, by the lacke of suche Markes of late yeres, ben myscaried, peryshed, and lost in the Sea, to the Great Detryment and Hurte of the Common Weale, and the perysheng of no small number of People."

It was therefore enacted that the Corporation be empowered to erect Sea-marks on the shores, forelands, &c., according to their discretion, and to continue and renew the same; also that steeples, trees, &c., being at that time beacons, &c., should not be removed under penalty of £100. Mariners licensed by Trinity House might be watermen on the Thames.

The Association received a confirmatory Charter from James I. in 1604; in 1661 from Charles II.; all of which were confirmed by Patent of James II. in 1685—the name then adopted or conferred being The Master, Wardens and Assistants of the Gild or Fraternity of the Most Glorious and Undivided Trinity, and of St. Clement, in the Parish of Deptford Strond, in the County of Kent.

In 1836 there was enacted the 6 and 7 William IV. c. 79—"An Act for Vesting Lighthouses, Lights, and Sea Marks on the Coast of England in the Corporation of Trinity House, of Deptford Strond; and for making Provisions respecting Lighthouses, Lights, Buoys, Beacons, and Sea Marks, and the Tolls and Duties payable in respect thereof"—which recited:

"Whereas by far the greater number of the lighthouses upon the Coasts of England, and the Islands and other places adjoining thereto, belong to or are under the control and management of the Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the Gild, Fraternity, or Brotherhood of the Most Glorious and Undivided Trinity, and of St. Clement, in the Parish of Deptford Strond, in the County of Kent, commonly called the Corporation of Trinity House, of Deptford Strond ; . . . and the said Master, Wardens, and Assistants are entitled to erect and maintain from time to time such and so many Beacons, Marks, and Signs for the Sea, in such place or places of the Sea Shores, and Up-lands near the Sea Coasts, or Forelands, as to them shall seem most meet, whereby Dangers may be avoided, and Ships the better come to their Ports without any peril. . . ."

Powers were then given to the Corporation of Trinity House to acquire and take control of all lights on the coasts of England. In respect of the lighthouses, all ships sailing to or from British ports pay a toll at the rate of one halfpenny per ton.

The Corporation is governed by one Master, four Wardens, eight Assistants, and eighteen Elder Brethren ; the less prominent members of the Fraternity, denominated Younger Brethren, and chosen among the masters and mates expert in navigation, are of an unlimited number, and serve for supplying vacancies amongst the thirty-one Elder Brethren.

The Master, &c., of this Gild are invested by their Charter with power to examine the mathematical children of Christ's Hospital ; to examine the Masters of Her Majesty's ships ; to appoint pilots for conducting ships in and out of the River Thames ; to amerce such as shall act as masters or pilots without their license in a fine of £20 ; to settle the several rates of pilotage ; also to erect lighthouses and other Sea-marks on the several coasts of the kingdom for the security of navigation ; to prevent aliens from serving on board English ships without their licence, under a penalty of £5 for each offence ; to punish seamen for desertion or mutiny in the merchant service ; to hear and determine the complaints of officers and seamen in this service, under an appeal to the Court of Admi-

ralty; and to grant licences to poor seamen (non-freemen of the Watermen's Company) to row on the Thames.

To this Corporation also belongs the *Ballast Office*, whose functions embrace the cleaning and deepening the River Thames, by taking from it a sufficient quantity of ballast for the supply of all ships that sail out of the river, under regulations fixed by Parliament concerning the same.

The Corporation is empowered by charter to purchase lands, &c., to the amount of £500 per annum; and also to receive charitable benefactions to the like amount. Out of its income the Corporation relieves annually some thousands of poor seamen, their widows and orphans, at an expenditure of over £6,000. It has three hospitals, two at Deptford and one at Mile-end; the latter being designed for decayed sea-officers, masters of vessels, pilots, and their widows.

There were other Fraternities of Gilds of a like character founded at *Newcastle* and at *Hull*. Mackenzie, in his "History of Newcastle," says:—

"It is very difficult to trace the origin of these marine establishments called Trinity Houses, though they are not very ancient. They probably arose from the mutual formation of Masters and Mariners into a Society for the promotion of their interests and the relief of their indigent and distressed brethren and widows, at a time when all charitable institutions assumed a religious character. They afterwards, by royal grants, or the powers conferred by the Lord High Admiral of England, rose into consequence, and have tended to promote and protect the navigation and commerce of the kingdom."

Faversham.—This ancient Borough—believed to have been familiar to the Romans in their fishing expeditions for the oysters of Rutupian Bay, rendered famous by Juvenal—has a Gild which has become entirely merged into the Corporation, in a very unusual manner. This is known as

The Mercers' Company.—Concerning its history we are informed as follows: "The Corporation, at the request of the Tradesmen of the Town, by a bye-law of 22nd May, 1616, did establish a fellowship and Society, by the name of the Company of Mercers, and

therein made several Rules and Orders for the better Regulation of all the tradesmen and artificers within their jurisdiction ; and did appoint a Master, two Wardens, and eight Assistants, to be a Court to admit persons to the Freedom thereof, and to settle any disputes that might arise ; and fixed the General Court of the said Company to be annually holden on Whit-Thursday, to elect the officers thereof, and to do any other business relative to their supporting the Establishment. This bye-law was the same year confirmed by two Judges of Assize ; but as some of the principal articles therein were found, for causes, necessary to be altered, another bye-law was compiled, having reference to the old one, which had also the sanction of being confirmed by the two Judges of Assize in the year 1699."

By this last-named law the Company was being regulated in 1774 (*vide* Jacob's "History of Faversham," p. 89), with some few variations which from time to time had been made by the Mayor, Jurats, and Commonalty in the Courts of Wardmote.

The Mayor for the time being was always Master of the Company, and two of the Jurats were chosen Wardens, and four Commoners, and four Freemen assistants, by the Freemen present at the Court on the said Thursday in Whitsun week ; the Clerk of the Company is Town Clerk, and the Beadle thereof is Common Crier. The fine of admission to the Freedom of the Company was £10.

Hythe.—Here there was in the 15th century, perhaps earlier, a Gild of the Religious class, bearing the designation of the *Fraternity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Hythe*. It is believed to have been analogous to the Gild or Fraternity of St. John, at Canterbury. A very interesting account of certain details regarding its accounts, &c., has been published, viz., "The Fraternity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Hythe." By H. B. Mackeson, F.G.S. London : John Russell Smith, 36, Soho-square, 1873.

Maidstone.—There are records of an early Religious Gild of some note in this town.

Gild of Corpus Christi.—About 1324 the religious fraternities of Corpus Christi, associated with the Benedictine Order of Monks, was established here. Its main object, it is asserted by historians, was

to support the doctrine of transubstantiation ; and the chief duties of the chaplain and brothers residing in the house were to carry the holy sacrament in religious processions ; to keep the Feast of Corpus Christi with great pomp and solemnity, and to pray for, and to celebrate masses and dirges at the deaths of the brothers or sisters. The extra members residing in the town and neighbourhood, and who subscribed to the support of the Gild, appear to have been numerous and distinguished. The possessions of the brotherhood were considerable, including several cottages in which old and indigent persons were permitted to dwell rent free.



CHAPTER XXX.

GILDS OF LANCASHIRE.

THE only return made for the County Palatine of Lancaster in 1388 was of a Gild in the borough of Lancaster. But we shall see that other Gilds existed in the county, presenting some remarkable features.

Lancaster.—Here was an early Gild which differed in its constitution but little from the type of burial societies which prevail so largely, and almost exclusively in this county, at the present day ; and it still more remarkably embodies the “collecting” feature, being the only Gild of this period known to have a regulation for collecting the dues by the aid of special officers. We give the ordinances in their entirety, with the exception of one slight deviation.

Gild of the Holy Trinity and St. Leonard, founded 1377.—These Ordinances were made on the Feast of St. Leonard, A.D. 1377. Whoever is admitted to the Gild shall make oath to keep these Ordinances. No one of the Gild shall do anything to the loss or hurt of another, nor shall allow it to be done so far as he can hinder it—the laws and customs of the town of Lancaster being always saved. No one of the Gild shall wrong the wife or daughter or sister of another, nor shall allow her to be wronged so far as he can hinder it. No one of the Gild shall take into his house anyone

known to be an adulterer, nor shall himself live in adultery ; and if it be shown that he has done either, and after two warnings he will not amend, he shall be altogether put out of the Gild. . . . If any one of the Gild die within Lancaster, all the brethren then in the town shall come to placebo and dirige, if summoned by the “ belman ” or pay *ij*℥. All shall go or send to the mass held for a dead brother or sister, and offer *ob.*, under the same penalty. Every one of the brethren shall say, for the soul of the dead, as quickly as he can, *lx.* Pater-nosters, with as many Hail-Marys. And the anniversary of every brother shall be duly kept. If any of the Gild dies outside the town of Lancaster, within a space of *xx.* miles, *xij.* bretheren shall wend and seek the body, at the cost of the Gild. And if the brother or sister so dying wished to be buried where he died, the said *xij.* shall see that he has fitting burial there, at the cost of the Gild. Each brother and sister so dying shall have, at the mass on the day of burial, six torches and *xviij.* wax lights ; and at other services two torches and *iiij.* wax lights. All the bretheren and unmarried sisteren of the Gild shall meet four times a year, on four Sundays (which are named). Each shall then pay *xij*℥. towards finding two chaplains to celebrate divine service in the town for the welfare of the King and the Queen and the Lord Duke of Lancaster, and the whole realm, and all the dead bretheren and sisteren of the Gild. Whoever does not come to these meetings, and does not pay the money within three weeks afterwards, shall pay half a pound of wax, which shall be doubled if there be a further arrear of three weeks. It is ordained that *xij.* good and discreet men of the Gild shall be chosen ; who shall have the power of admitting fresh bretheren and sisteren ; shall arrange with each of these what shall be paid on entry ; shall deal with what other matters touch the good name, profit, and well-being of the Gild ; and shall appoint the places and times of meetings :—and these *xij.* shall be chosen afresh every year, if it be thought fit. Collectors shall be chosen, to gather in all dues. They shall render an account to the aforesaid *xij.*, or the greater part of them, so that the *xij.* may every quarter let the Gild know how its affairs stand.

Liverpool.—Here we have a remarkable instance of a Merchant

Gild regulating the privileges of buying and selling within the borough.

Merchant Gild, 1229. By charter of Henry III.—the borough had received a previous charter from John in 1207—it was provided as follows :—

“Know ye that we have granted and by this our charter have confirmed, that our town of Leverepul shall for ever be a free borough, and that the burgesses of the same borough shall have a mercatorial Gild, with a hanse and other liberties, and free customs to the same Gild pertaining; and that no one who is not of the same Gild shall transact any merchandise in the aforesaid borough unless by consent of the same burgesses.”

The “Gildam mercatorium cum hansa” here granted took, as was frequently the case, a twofold form. The Merchants Gild developed into a municipal Corporation, but the Hanse—following the definition of Ducange, of being *Mercatorium Societas*, a company of merchants or traders—commenced to trade on its own account; and looking with jealous eyes on all competitors, applied to them strictly the latter words of the charter above quoted. If it could not drive them from the field, it could mulct them in fines for permission to trade. It will be instructive to take a few examples of what was done in this direction, the more so that the cases here given are strictly authentic.

1339. Richard II. confirmed previous charters, “at the same time granting that no person not of the Gild should buy or sell any merchandise in the borough without the consent of the burgesses.”

1581. The Corporation records say, under date 13th April this year: “Rauffe Serocold of Manchester gave four marks to the Town to be allowed to make his best market for his Iron and Trayne Oil, which came to Liverpool in the good ship the barque *Straunge*.”

1590, Nov. 5. Item: “George Hodser, a merchant from Ireland, whoe brought hither certen grayne, to wete, Wheate, and Rye, w^{ch} was thought conveniente to have ben hadd as a common bargain for the towne; howbeit after some conference in the haule at a convocacon there, yt was agreed betweene Mr. Maior, his bretheren and burgesses, and the said Hodser, that the same George Hodser in

consideracon of the summe of xxvjs. viij*℥*. by him to be paid unto the towne, he should have libertie to take his best marquett for his said commoditie within the towne, which was to him graunted, and soe paide for the same the said summe of xxvjs. viij*℥*. to the hands of Mr. Bailliff Formebie for the Towne's use."

1591. March 23.—At an Assembly in the Common Hall: "One Mr. Pratt came before Mr. Maior and the whole assemblie concerning certen Rie and Barlie by him and his capten brought into this ryver from Ireland, to the nomber and quantitie of sixe score barrells of both sorts, w^{ch} they p^rffered to Mr. Maior and the towne to be solde, for the w^{ch}, Mr. Maior, wth the consente of the wholl assemblie proffered vijs. iiij*℥*. for a barrell of the said rye, and sixe shillings for a barrell of the said barlie, w^{ch} price the said merchants of the aforesaid grayne refusinge, did then and there voluntarelie make p^rffer to Mr. Maior to the towne's use and p^rffit of the summe of xxxijs. iiij*℥*. to have license and free on 23d March, whereof the following is the formal record :—

"It was inquired whether corne or other victuals cominge or to be broughte unto this saide towne and porte of Liv'poole by waye of mercandize may lawfullie, and by the orders of this hanse, be bargained and bought by anie freeman of this towne wthoute the speciall licence and consent of Mr. Maior of the same towne for the tyme being, wth the assente also of the Aldermen his bretheren and burgesses, the same goods being before p^rffered to the towne to be solde.

"Whereunto all the whole assemblie (by poles and afterwards wth a gen'all voice) made answer sayinge yt was not lawfull for anie one to bargain or bie any of the commodities above mentioned, the same being first (to be) p^rffered to the towne to be solde as is above said.

"Whereupon the determinacon of a certain offense supposed to have bene committed by Gyles Brooke of this towne, marchant, touchinge the buyinge of certen graine brought hither by one Phepole's man oute of Ireland, was referred and put over untill fryday then nexte, libertie to take their best marquett for the sales of theire said graine, w^{ch} in ende was to them granted by a

gen'all consente, and soe they p'mised to paye the said summe of xxxiijs. iiij^d., which was to be paid wthin twoe dayes then next following."

This Hanse, or trading body, included the whole of the freemen and burgesses, to whom any produce imported had first to be offered. The process was this. A value was put upon it by the *Prizers* (town appraisers). If the importers did not choose to accept the price so fixed, they had to bargain with the town as to what they should pay for permission to sell in the open market. This regulation was strictly enforced; of which the following is an instance.

In this same year (1591) one Gyles Brooke (who in the following year was elected Mayor) had bargained on his own account for a cargo of grain from Ireland. This was considered a grave offence, and the matter was brought before the Town's Assembly following.

On Friday the Assembly met again, and proceeded to confer, "Concerninge the determination or ending of the matter of offence committed by the said Gyles Brooke before menconed and spoken of." It is then recorded :

"The offence beinge sufficientlie founde and approved in the said Gyles Brooke, as well by the confession of the yonge man s'vante to the said Mr. Phepole aforenamed, whoe had solde the foresaide graine unto the said Gyles Brooke as otherwise, a fyne by a gen'all consente was sett downe, according to the greater p'te of the said Assemblie, beinge dem'ded for the assessinge of the said fyne to the summe of ffyve shillings in regard the said Gyles Brooke did allege his said offence to be done and committed ignorantlie and not otherwise, and submitted him selfe to the curtesie and good consideracon of the howse w^{ch} summe of fyve shillings was by him paid to the hands of Mr. Bailiff Ball to the towne's use."

The importer of the grain (Mr. Phepole) was at a subsequent Assembly fined 5s.

In connection wth these high-handed proceedings, it becomes necessary to review the provisions of a later charter, granted by Philip and Mary in 1556. This is the sixth charter granted to the borough. It also enacts "that no one who is not of the same Gild, shall transact any merchandize in the borough unless by consent of

the same burgesses." But it contained also some additional words which, whether intended to do so or not, had the effect of limiting the construction which had been adopted in the practice under the earlier charters, viz. : "We have granted also to the same burgesses and their heirs, that whatsoever merchants shall seek the borough with their merchandize, whether strangers or others, may safely and securely come with their merchandize, and safely remain and thence depart, doing therefor the right and due customs."

It is probable that in consequence of the transactions already narrated, attention may have been drawn to the last-quoted words. What followed indicates some modification of practice.

On April 14, same year (1591), it stands recorded :—

"Item, concerninge certen *Tallowe* called rendered tallowe, brought hither for a towne's bargain, the quantitie whereof being soe small as but fyve cwt. or thereabouts, yt is therefore thought mete and soe agreed upon by a common consente, that from henceforth anie freeman of this saide towne, one or moe may bargain and buy as well the said quantitie of tallowe above menconed as all other such like w^{ch} shall fall oute as this doth, not fitte for a common bargain, yet, nevertheles, if any one free burgess of this towne, being a townesman, shall buie anie such quantitie he shall not denie one or moe of his neighbours beinge free of the corporacon to be p'takers thereof with him ; soe he or they come in conveniente time. And that the first buier of the same shall, upon such a bargain or contracte made give undelaied notice and knowledge hereof to Mr. Maier of this towne for the tyme being, or to his deputie, soe as either proclamacon maye be made, or els particular warninge be given at ev'ri freeman's house by the underbailiff to the same effecte, and the like order and rule to be observed for corn and grain.

"Item. It is nevertheless thought meete and conveniente and thereupon agreed as afore', that anie one townes man being a free burgess of the same shall and may wthoute restraunte or offence, bargain and buie anie rendred tallowe not surpassing one cwt. of roughe tallowe ; nor above the nomber or quantitie of thirtie or fortie stonnes, or the nomber and quantitie of xxxtie barrells, and not above of graine or corne, brought or to be brought hither to be solde

by anie maren' or sailor, or other p'son or p'sons, and this to be lawfull for anie one townes man beinge free, for his owne p'per use w^{thout} anie other to be p'taker w'th him thereof, anie above to the contrarie notwithstanding."

But again the question came up at a convocation in the Common Hall, before John Byrde, Mayor, April 20, of which the record stands ;—

"First, conce'ninge certain tallowe latelie brought hither by one Nicholas Creley and others, whose names are hereafter subscribed, supposed to be bargained and brought contrarie to the orders of this towne, to the use of forrainers, w^{ch} said tallowe as it appeareth now sithence, was not so brought as yt was supposed. Soe that it is nowe by this wholl assemblie concluded and agreed, that in the furtherence and advancement of o^r liberties and trafique here, yt is and shall be lawful from henceforthe, to and for ev'ie or anie mann' of townes man beinge a fre burg^s of this Corporacon, to bargain and buie anie manner of goods, m'chandizes, and other commodities whatsoev^r (victuels onely excepted), to and for his owne p'per use and commoditie not extendinge above the value and summe of twentie pounds ; soe as the marchante sellor of the same goods, &c., doe yelde and paye for his libertie and licence to sell the same to the towne's use and benefite the summe of eighte shillings, and for victuels the lyke libertie is graunted, both to the seller and to the buier, if the commoditie of such victuells surpas not the value of tenne pounds, the seller yeldinge and paying to the townes use the sum of foure shillings, and this order to have continuance, and be in force until yt be repelled or revoked by this howse.

Item, it is further agreed as afore that if anie townes man will have parte of the tallowe now supposed to be solde by Nicholas Creley, and others, givinge notice thereof to Mr. Maior anie tyme of this p'sente daye, he shall have the same at the price of iij^s. vij^d. the stonne, so as to take it by the cwt. or barrell, and make undelaied paimente for the same upon the receipt thereof. And for this tyme the m'chant buier shall paye for his licence of the sales of the said tallowe but sixpeñce upon the barrells and xij^d. upon the cwt., the former order notwithstandinge. And the said Patrick Creber for his

p'te had libertie for his porcon of the said tallowe, viz., for licence to sell the same, payinge therefor the sum of twoe shillings sixe pence, w^{ch} was paide to the hands of Mr. Bailif Formbie to the townes use."

On the 31st May the question of tallow from Ireland again came up; and just previously trouble had been threatened with Chester on account also of tallow. The record of the Irish case is as follows:—

"Imp'mis for and conc'ninge certen tallowe brought hither by one Garland, from Ireland, Marchante, viz., twoe tonnes in casque, and because that men of Chest^r as appeareth by a l're missyve sente from the Maior of the said citie of Chest^r to Mr. Maior of this towne, have bargained and bought the same by an absolute contracte. To cutt off such disordered dealinge, it is thought mete that the said commoditie shalbe taken by the towne, and for that the quantitie thereof is but smale, yt is concluded and agreed by the wholl assemblie that Mr. Maior shall have the said tallowe to his owne commoditie and use, payinge to the towne for the same the summe of xlii."

Early in the following year questions arose concerning wool; but enough has been said to show the arbitrary rules which were attempted to be enforced in the Gild of the Hanse; regulations which must have operated largely towards the restriction of trade, and could not have promoted its advancement.

Other Gilds.—We must now retrace our steps in point of date a little. The phrases, "other liberties," and "free customs to the same Gild pertaining," in the grant of the "Gildam Mercatorium," are believed to have included the permission to form minor trade fellowships, and several such were constituted.

In 1558 there was in existence a Tailors' Gild, and one John Pemberton was admitted to his freedom on payment of 6s. 8d. As soon as he was admitted he stirred up his brethren of the craft, and under his leadership a petition was presented to the Mayor and Assembly, along with a *douceur* of 50s., setting forth that the honourable fraternity of tailors formerly enjoyed certain exclusive privileges which had fallen into disuse, and praying for sanction to form themselves into an exclusive Gild, prohibiting all others from engaging in the trade under pain of fine and forfeiture. This was

assented to, and a charter accordingly granted, signed by Robert Corbett, Mayor, Sir Richard Molyneaux of Sefton, Sir William Norris of Speke, Ralph Sekerston, M.P. and Alderman, George Fairclough, Alderman, and John More of Bank Hall, and George Ireland of Hale, Squires, Burgesses, with the whole assent of the co-burgesses.

1559. Alexander Garnett, who succeeded to the civic chair, took a hostile position, and the fraternity was for the moment suppressed ; but in the following year was revived under the sheltering wing of brave old Ralph Sekerston, and continued to flourish.

1581. The *Tailors' Gild* came before the assembly, and asked for authority to charge 4s. 6d. for the "goodwill and admission of members." At the same time the *Company of Websters* requested authority to charge 5s. for the like privilege. Both applications were granted. See Picton's *Liverpool Municipal Records*, 1883, p. 74.



CHAPTER XXXI.

THE GILDS OF LANCASHIRE—(*continued*).

PRESTON.—The Merchant Gild of this borough is historically famous. It is supposed to have taken its origin in Anglo-Saxon times. Many Gilds Merchant were established in seaports in the time of the Saxons. These, as we have seen, were fraternities constituted for the purpose of carrying on more successfully commercial enterprises with Hanse privileges. Preston was one of the early ports selected for these purposes. The fact that the record of the periodical meeting of the Gild for its municipal festivities is not found until the reign of Henry I. (early in the twelfth century) does not controvert this supposition.

The "Customal of Preston," which is attributed to the reign of Henry II., indicates that the Gild speedily became one of the Town or Corporation class—a form which the Merchant Gilds very frequently assumed. Here is an abstract of its provisions, so far as they relate to the Gild :—

These are the liberties of Preston, in Amundrenesse :

1. So that they shall have a Gild Merchant with Hanse, and other Customs, belonging to such Gild ; and so that no one who is not of that Gild shall make any merchandize in the said town, unless with the will of the burgesses.

2. If any native [bondman] reside in the same town, and hold any land, and be in the same Gild, and Hanse, and pay scot and lot with the same burgesses for one year and a day, then he shall not be reclaimed by his lord, but shall remain free in the same town. [He became literally a *free-man*.]

3. The burgesses of Preston shall have soc and sac, tol and them and infangthef, and they shall be quit throughout all the land of toll, lastage, passage, pontage, and stallage, from Lengeld [land tax ?] and Denegeld and Gathwaite [fine for breach of the peace ?], and all other customs and actions throughout all our land and dominion, as well in England as in other our lands ; and that no sheriff shall intermeddle with the burgesses of Preston concerning any plea, or plaint, or dispute, or any other thing pertaining to the aforesaid town, saving [the pleas of] the King's Crown.

4. If anyone wish to be made a burgess, he shall come into court and give to the Mayor 12d., and shall take his burgage from the Mayor ; afterwards he shall give to the Mayor's clerk 1d., that he may certify him to have been made a burgess in court. . . .

10. Also, if any burgess shall buy any bargain or any merchandize, and give earnest, and he who sold shall repent of his bargain, he shall double the earnest ; but if the buyer shall have handled the goods, he shall either have the merchandize or 5s. from the seller. . . .

13. Also, a burgage shall accommodate his lord out of his bargain, and the lord shall pay for it to him within forty days, but if he doth not, the burgess shall not accommodate him again until he shall pay.

14. Also, no one can be a burgess unless he hold a burgage of twelve feet in front.

15. Also, if a burgess shall sell for more than the assize he shall be in mercy 12d., and he who bought in nothing ; so the burgess of the court aforesaid shall have fuel, fire, and water to make judgment.

16. Also, if any be taken for theft or breach of trust, and be condemned, he who sued shall do justice.

24. Also, a stranger may not participate in any merchandize with the burgesses of the town. . . .

29. Also, if one shall demand a debt of another before the Reeve, if he be unwilling to pay, the Mayor shall render the plaintiff his debt from the king's purse, and shall distrain the other by his chattels till he pay the debt, or he shall seize the house into his hands.

30. Also, the burgesses shall not receive claim from the Reeve on a market day unless the claim be made by a stranger.

38. Also, it shall not be lawful for regrators to buy anything which shall be sold on a market day to a regrator until the bells be rung in the evening, nor in any day in the week, until that which he bought shall be in the town one night.

40. If anyone shall be summoned when the justice of the town shall be in the expedition [the Assizes?] and shall not go, but shall acknowledge himself to have heard [the Proclamation?], he shall forfeit 12d. ; if he denies to have heard the edict, he shall clear himself by his own oath ; but if he shall have esoin, to wit, either by his wife's lying in child-bed of a son, or other reasonable esoin, he shall not pay.

I have not met with this last in any other Customal in England. This Customal was admittedly founded upon the laws of the Bretons.

An early but authentic document shows the form of procedure to be observed at the Gild assemblies : " All burgesses dwellying wythin the towne of Preston " were to be ready to go in procession throughout the town on the first day. After the procession there was to be " a masse with solempnytie of the Holy Goyste, solempnley to be held with the Mayor and Aldermen. The formal Gild assembly was then to be held, " that the poynts and the rights of the Gyld marchaunt moght be knowen to all burgesses, therefore was made three Proclamacions in ye open market three dayes, that all manner of men clayming franchises of fredome within our burgh of Preston, whether they it claym by descent or purchase, that they shall apper at ye tyme that Gyld Marchaunt is holden before the Mayor and the Burgesses of the same Gyld, for to here and know the franchise, free-

doms, and liberties, and all other poynts appertaynyng to ye said Gyld Marchaunt, the whyche we have by letters patent, by ye said lege lord the Kyng, and of his most noble progenitors to us graunted before this tyme."

In 1329 (2 Edward III.), a set of by-laws were made for regulating the affairs of the Gild. Subsequent by-laws have been made by the Mayor, Stewards, and Aldermen of the Gild. They were made or altered experimentally between the periods of holding of the Gild, and if found to work well, were enacted at the following Gild.

By process of time, the Gild-meeting came to assume the form of a Court of Session of corporate legislation, to be held at intervals, at which all the laws for the government of the Corporation are passed, and at which all the privileges of the burgesses are first claimed, and subsequently renewed.

It is traditionally but erroneously supposed that it is obligatory on the Corporation of Preston to celebrate a Gild every twenty years, but no such obligation exists. A by-law was passed in the reign of Elizabeth that the Gild festival should be so held ; but the practice is optional, not obligatory ; and no privileges would be forfeited by reason of any variation from this practice.

Previously to holding a Gild Festival, a Court, constituted as already stated of the Mayor, Stewards, and Aldermen of the Gild, sits daily in the Town-hall for twenty-eight days to renew and grant freedoms. The words of invitation in the original record are these :—

" If any be mindful to be made a burgess, let him come into the Court and render to the Pretor twelve pence, and take his burgess from the Pretor, and render to the Pretor's servant one penny, and he shall bear witness that he was made a Burgess in this Court."

Early in the Gild year the Mayor issues a Proclamation giving notice that :

" The Gild Merchant for the Borough of Preston will be opened with the usual solemnities in the Town Hall, on the first Monday after the Feast of the Decollation of St. John the Baptist, when all persons claiming to have any rights to Freedom, or other Franchise, of the same borough, whether by ancestry, prescription, or pur-

chase, are to appear by themselves or their proxies to claim and make out their several rights thereto, otherwise they will, according to ancient and immemorial usage, forfeit the same."

Thus it is clear that the purchase or grant of municipal freedom extends only from Gild to Gild Festival; and if not renewed at each returning celebration, it is lost. In this particular the practice of the Preston Gild seems to be unique, as it is also in regard to the long intervals between the holding of the Gild Assembly; but as its functions are now confined to the admittance of freemen, the intervals are perhaps not too long.

There are a number of minor trading Companies in the borough which appear to owe allegiance to the Merchant Gild, as indeed is quite usual. Thus we find in the great processions the following Companies take part, in the order here stated:

1, Tanners, Skinners, Curriers, and Glovers; 2, Cotton Spinners and Weavers, headed by their masters, and accompanied by machines in motion, mounted upon stages, by which all the processes of the business are performed; 3, Cordwainers; 4, Carpenters; 5, Butchers; 6, Vintners; 7, Tailors; 8, Plasterers; 9, Smiths; 10, Gardeners; 11, Odd Fellows; 12, Printers and Bookbinders; 13, Freemasons.

We may assume that the Odd Fellows and Freemasons, who have figured in later processions, have taken the place of some of the minor Companies; or perhaps have been added to give importance to the procession; as also to include those engaged in trades not specially represented.

The duration of the Gild sitting, which was formerly a month, is now only for a fortnight; but for civic purposes the books of the Gild are opened for twenty-eight days, as we have seen. The entertainments (for the detailed management of which Committees of the Corporation are appointed) are generally confided to the determination of the Mayor and Mayoress, as also are the processions, subject to arrangement with the Trade Companies and the head lodges.

The Gild procession—always a feature of the early Gilds—in the case of Preston Gild seems more to resemble the Carnivals of Italy

than the *Saturnalia* of Northern Europe. Here (Preston) the ladies always take prominent part, and their presence not only lends a charm to the proceedings, but prevents any attempt at disorderly conduct. The trade companies or fraternities commence to assemble under their respective banners about eight o'clock in the morning. About half-past ten they are formed into order by the Grand Marshal. The Mayor and Corporation, accompanied by a large assembly of the nobility and gentry of the county, pass through the lines thus formed on their way to the parish church. After which service the Grand Procession is formed. The Companies, decorated with the insignia of their trades and headed by bands, lead the procession; the rear is brought up by the Corporation and gentry. On the following day is the ladies' procession, headed by the Mayoress, in which the ladies of all the best families in the county are wont to take part, sometimes to the number of many hundreds. Every day during the fortnight has its appointed amusements.

At the conclusion of the Gild, the Masters and Wardens of all the different Companies attend, as on the first day, upon the Mayor, in open court at the Gild Hall, along with a number of the burgesses. The Companies then have their Gild orders sealed and regularly entered in the books of the Corporation. Proclamation is next made, and the name of each inhabitant burgess called over; when the Grand Seneschal, or Town Clerk, affixes the Corporation seal upon the Gild book, which afterwards holding up, he says: "Here is your law." The Sergeants then make proclamation in these terms:—

"This Grand Gild Merchants' Court is adjourned for twenty years, until a new Gild Merchants Court be held and duly proclaimed."

The Gild ceremony is attended with considerable cost. That for 1802 cost the Corporation £1,302 14s.; but against this outlay there were receipts which would have left a surplus had they not gone according to custom to the Mayor personally: viz., received from places of amusement, £1,863 8s. 9d.; from sale of articles after the ceremony, £272 4s. 2d. In 1822 the cost was recorded as being £1,278 os. 4d., exclusive of wine.

The last Gild Court was held in 1882, and the proceedings were

conducted with great splendour. Mr. W. A. Abram prepared for the *Preston Guardian* a very full account of many previous Gild meetings, and the same was reprinted in a separate volume. There have been accounts published of several previous meetings. "Authentic Records of the Guild Merchant of Preston, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, in the Year 1822, &c." This has passed through several editions.

Wigan.—This ancient town had a Merchant Gild, with a Hanse, and privileges of safe passage of goods from one town or kingdom to another. The Gild became so powerful as to have a voice in the settlement of every local question. In 1249 the Rector, who was lord of the town, is said to have bestowed by charter special privileges upon the burgesses or members of the Gild and to their heirs for ever. In 1349 Edward III. granted a new charter, having previously placed under forfeiture the charter referred to, probably on account of the abuse of power by the Rector. The Merchant Gild had previously regulated the mercantile transactions of the town. The new charter rendered it legal for it to do so. The smaller trade Companies, the Weavers, Fullers, Dyers, Turners, and Tanners of the town had certain privileges conferred upon them. There was nothing otherwise special about this Merchant Gild. It possessed very full powers, and exercised them almost despotically in support of the trade of the town. (*Vide* Sinclair's most excellent "History of Wigan," 1882-3.)



CHAPTER XXII.

THE GILDS OF LINCOLNSHIRE.

THE Gilds of this county were not only very numerous, but they were regarded as important in several respects. I shall give some account of them under the several towns wherein they flourished. There were also many village Gilds.

Boston.—In this ancient town were various Gilds of great note, but the materials for detailed history have only been preserved in exceptional cases.

Gild of the Blessed Mary.—This appears to have ranked first amongst the Boston Gilds, and is believed to have been the *Gilda Mercatoria* of Boston, although its constitution in considerable part was ecclesiastical. The earliest mention of this Gild appears to be in 1393. The Gild itself was probably founded earlier—certainly other Gilds of earlier date existed in the town. The first Patent was granted to it at the date just named. Another Patent is dated in 1445, and a third in 1447. In this last year, Henry VI. granted a licence to “Richard Benynton and others that they should give to the Aldermen of the Gild of the Fraternity of the Blessed Mary of Boston, in the County of Lincoln, five messuages, thirty-one acres of land, and ten acres of pasture in Boston and Skirbeck.” Another Patent grant was issued to this institution in 1483. This Gild had a Chapel, called the Chapel of our Lady, in the Parish Church.

In 1510, Pope Julius II. in a “Pardon” granted to the town, provided that whatsoever Christian people, of what estate or condition soever, whether spirituall or temporall, would aid and support the Chamberlain or substitute of the aforesaid Gilde, should have five hundred years of pardon!

Item, to all brothers and sisters of the same Gilde was granted free liberty to eate in the time of Lent, or other fast-days, eggs, milk, butter, cheese, and also flesh by the counsell of their ghostly father and physician, without any scruple of conscience.

Item, that all partakers of the same Gilde, and being supporters thereof, which once a quarter, or every Friday or Saturday, either in the said Chappell or any other Chappell of their devotion, shall say a *Paternoster*, *Ave Maria*, and *creed*, or shall say or cause to be said masses for souls departed in pains of purgatory, shall not only have the full remission due to them which visite the Chappell of Scala Cæli, or of St. John Latern [in Rome]; but also the souls in purgatory shall enjoy full remission and be released of all their paines.

Item, that all the souls of the brothers and sisters of the said Gilde, also the souls of their fathers and mothers, shall be partakers of all the prayers, suffrages, alms, fastings, masses and mattens, pilgrimages, and all other good deedes of all the holy Church militant for ever.

This pardon—and many such pardons, indulgences, grants and relaxations, were issued by Popes Nicholas V., Pius II., Sixtus, as well as Julius II.—was through the request of King Henry VIII., 1526, confirmed by Pope Clement VII.

It appears that at the time Pope Julius granted his “Bull” the Gild maintained seven priests, twelve ministers, and thirteen beadsmen; and also seems to have supported a grammar school. “The seats or stalls (says Thompson in his “Collections,” &c., 1820) on the south side of the chancel of the church were no doubt erected for the use of the master and bretheren of this establishment.” At the dissolution (1538) this college, as it was then called, was valued at £24.

The Guildhall of this establishment is yet remaining, and is used by the Corporation for their corporate and judicial proceedings. Beadsman-lane, adjoining the Guildhall, was no doubt inhabited by the beadsmen belonging to this institution; and the ancient buildings in Spain-lane were, it is very probable, the warehouses of the merchants. The possessions of this Gild were given to the Corporation in 1554, first of Mary.

Gild of St. Botolph.—It is recorded that in 1349 (23rd Edward III.) a patent was granted for making a Gild in the town of St. Botolph—the ancient name of Boston. And also that in the same year Gilbert de Elilond gave to the Aldermen, &c., of the Gild of St. Botolph certain lands and tenements in that town. Another patent in behalf of this institution was granted in 1399.

In 1403, Henry IV. granted a licence to Thomas de Friseby and others, that they might give to the Aldermen and brethren of the Gild or fraternity in Boston one messuage, forty acres of land, and twenty acres of meadow with the appurtenances “which they held of the Lord of Bello-monto for services, &c.” In 1411, the King granted a licence to Richard Pynchebek and others, that they should give to Richard Lister, master of the Gild or fraternity in the town of St. Botolph, certain lands, &c.

It is not known who founded this Gild; what was the extent of its possessions; or the particular object of its institution. “It is most probable, however (says Thompson), that it was founded by a

Company of merchants, and that its objects were entirely of a mercantile nature." There is no account of any hall or other buildings belonging to this Gild.

Gild of Corpus Christi.—The first mention of this Gild is in 1389, when a patent was issued for the "Guild or Fraternity of Corpus Christi in St. Botolph." Another patent was granted in 1392 for an Alderman, &c., of this Gild; a third grant bears date 1403. King Henry V. granted a licence in 1413 to John Barker, chaplain, and John Wellesby, chaplain, that they should give to the Alderman and brothers and sisters of the Gild of Corpus Christi, in the town of St. Botolph, two messuages with certain lands, &c., in Boston and Skirbeck. In 1414 another patent was granted to this Gild.

Mr. Thompson considers that this was in all probability a religious Gild. At the dissolution it was called a "College," and its valuation, as given both by Dugdale and Speed, was £32. The situation of the hall of this institution was contiguous to Corpus Christi-lane, in Wide Bargate. No remains of any buildings, &c., belonging to it were visible in 1820.

Gild of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul.—The earliest record of this Gild is in 1393, when a patent was issued "for the Gild or Fraternity of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, in the Church of St. Botolph in the Town of St. Botolph." A second grant is dated 1448.

This appears to have been a religious establishment, and to have had a chapel, or at least an altar, in the parish church of St. Botolph. It was called a college at the dissolution, and was valued at £10 13s. 4d. It is supposed that St. Peter's-lane, in Wide Bargate, had probably some connection with this Gild.

The charter of Philip and Mary, dated 1554, vested the possessions of this institution in the Corporation.

St. George's Gild.—This was founded prior to 1403, for in that year a patent grant was issued in confirmation of a licence for the formation of this fraternity. In 1415 a patent was granted for the keeping or governing of the Gild of St. George in the town of St. Botolph.

This appears to have been a trading company, no mention being made of it at the dissolution.

The hall of this Gild was standing in 1726 at the bottom of St. George's-lane, on the west side of the river.

Gild of Holy Trinity.—Patent grants to this fraternity were issued in 1409 and 1411.

It appears from documents in the archives of the Corporation of Boston that Stephen Clerke, warden and keeper of the fraternity of the Holy Trinity, in the town of St. Botolph, together with the brethren and sisters thereof, did surrender to Nicholas Robertison, mayor, and the other burgesses of the *new* borough of Boston, all the estates, effects, and property of the said fraternity whatsoever, by deed under the common seal of their Gild, dated 22nd of July, in the 37th of Henry VIII. (1546). This surrender was formally made in a house then called the Trinity Chamber, which was most probably the hall or Gild of the fraternity. Its site is unknown. The possessions of this Gild were confirmed to the Corporation by Philip and Mary A.D. 1554; as were those of the St. Mary, St. Peter, and St. Paul Gilds, at the same time, "the better to support the Bridge and Port of Boston."

It is more than probable that these Gilds played an important part in connection with the great fairs held in this town, but no evidence is at hand.

Craft Gilds.—During the sixteenth and early in the seventeenth century, various Craft Gilds were founded in the borough. Of these, particular mention is made of the following: 1555, the Company of Cordwainers and Curriers established; 1562, the Tailors' Company; 1576, the Glovers' Company; 1598, the Smiths', Farriers', Braziers', and Cutlers' Companies; 1606, the Butchers' Company established.

These Craft Gilds were founded and conducted on the usual model of the period, as may be seen by the constitution of the Cordwainers' Company. This Company was authorised, and its regulations sanctioned by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the borough in 1855, the following being the substance of its regulations:—

There should be elected on the Monday before the Feast of St.

Martin, by the said Company, two wardens, who should choose a person as beadle, to be attendant on the said wardens.

The officers were to be presented before and sworn in by the Mayor for the time being, on the feast day of St. Andrew, to serve their respective offices for one whole year.

The said wardens should have authority over all manner of persons using the occupation or mystery of cordwainer in the said borough of Boston.

That no person or persons should set up within the said borough as cordwainers until such time as they could sufficiently cut or make a boot or shoe, to be adjudged by the said wardens, and were made free by the Mayor, Aldermen, &c., of the said borough, upon pain of forfeiting £3 6s. 8d., to be paid to the use of the Company: or to suffer imprisonment; this fine or imprisonment to be levied as often as any person should attempt the same.

If any foreigner, or person who did not serve his apprenticeship in the said borough, should be admitted to his freedom by the Mayor, &c., that he shall then pay to the wardens £3 6s. 8d. before he should be admitted a fellow of the said Company.

That no fellow of this Company, his journeymen or servants, should work on the Sabbath-day, either in town or country.

That the wardens of the said Company should have power once a month at least, or oftener if required, to search throughout the whole Company of Cordwainers and Curriers for unlawful wares or leathers.

There is no reference here to any powers of searching the stalls at the fairs for "unlawful wares;" but it is not improbable that such a power was exercised by the wardens of these Craft Gilds.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE GILDS OF LINCOLNSHIRE—(*Continued*).

LINCOLN.—The Gilds of this ancient ecclesiastical city are of much interest: some of them present a combination of the Social and the Craft Gilds.

Gild of the Fullers of Lincoln.—"This Gild was founded on the

Sunday before the feast of the Apostles Philip and James, A.D. 1297, by all the bretheren and sisteren of the Fullers in Lincoln." A wax light to be burnt before the cross on procession days. Directions as to who shall work at certain operations. Half-holidays on Saturdays; and no work on festivals. Outsiders may work at the trade on making small payments. A payment to be made before learning the trade. No thief shall stay in the Gild. On death of any member, bread to be given to the poor. "If any brother or sister is going on a pilgrimage to Sts. Peter and Paul [Rome], if it is a Sunday or other festival day, all the bretheren and sisteren shall go in company with him outside the city as far as the Queen's Cross, and each shall give him a halfpenny or more; and when he comes back, if, as before said, it is a Sunday or other festival day, and he has let them know of his coming, all the bretheren and sisteren shall meet at the same cross, and go with him to the monastery." Penalty for not keeping Ordinances. Help shall be given to those in want; but the money must be repaid before death or after. Lights and offerings on death. There were some new Ordinances added later, viz., allowances to officers; allowance for collecting moneys. Officers not serving to be fined. New members to pay to the Dean a penny.

Gild of the Tailors of Lincoln, founded 1328.—A procession shall be had every year. Payment on entrance, a quarter of barley, and xij*d.* "to the ale." Help to the poor—7*d.* per week. Burials for poor members, "according to the rank of him who is dead." Pilgrims to the Holy Land or to Rome to receive a halfpenny from each member, and processions to be formed. Services for those dying outside the city. Bequests to be made to Gild according to means, "vs. or xl*d.*, or what he will." Fee to chaplain. Four general meetings every year. Payment to the Gild when any master tailor takes an apprentice. Quarrels to be arranged; whoever will not abide judgment of Gild to be put out. On feast days ale to be given to the poor. Burial rites. If any master knowingly takes a sewer who has wrongfully left another master, he shall be fined. Payment of vj*d.* to the Guild for every sewer employed by master. A dole to be given yearly by every brother and sister for distribution in charity. Fines for not serving offices.

Gild of the Tylers [Poyntours] of Lincoln, founded 1346.—New members to make themselves known to “Graceman,” and pay a quarter of barley, *ijd.* to the ale, and *id.* to the Dean. Four “soul-candles” shall be found and used in services. Feasts and prayers, and ale for the poor. Help to the pilgrims. Burials provided. One brother shall not unfairly meddle with the craft-work of another. All men of this craft in Lincoln shall join the Gild.

Gild of St. Michael on the Hill, founded on Easter Eve, 1350.—On the death of a brother “soul-candles” shall be burned and the banner of the Gild shall be taken to his house, and borne thence to church. There shall be a Gild feast. At the end the Ordinances shall be read and expounded; and flagons of ale shall be given to the poor. Absentees may rejoin the Gild on making payments. “And whereas this Gild was founded by folks of common and middling rank, it is ordained that no one of the rank of Mayor or Bailiff shall become a brother of the Gild, unless he is found to be of humble, good, and honest conversation, and is admitted by the choice and common consent of the bretheren and sisteren of the Gild. And none such shall meddle in any matter, unless specially summoned; nor shall such a one take on himself any office in the Gild. He shall, on his admission, be sworn before the bretheren and sisteren, to maintain and keep the Ordinances of the Gild. And no one shall have any claim to office in this Gild on account of the honour and dignity of his personal rank.” Help to poor bretheren shall be daily given, in turn, by the Gild bretheren.

The Ordinances of this Gild were very lengthy; the main features only are here noticed.

Gild of the Resurrection of our Lord, founded at Easter, 1374.—Every brother and sister at entrance shall pay *ivd.* to the ale and *id.* to the wax; and also every year *xijd.* by four separate payments in the year. Those in arrear to pay a pound of wax. Lights to be kept burning from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. A hearse-frame, with lights, angels, and banners, shall be put over the body of every dead brother; and other services be done. Help to poor bretheren, “if not through his own fault, by wasting his goods in unlawful uses,”—every member paying *2d.* in the year to all impoverished. Fine on

officers not serving. Holders of loans to bring them before the "Gracemen" every year. Mass and offerings for the dead. At the annual feast the Ordinances to be read. After dinner, grace, the Lord's Prayer, &c., names of all dead bretheren and sisteren shall be read over, and the *De Profundis* said for their souls. Pilgrims to Rome, St. James of Galacia, or the Holy Land, to give notice, and receive contributions of one halfpenny from each member, with escort to city gate. Burials of poor bretheren. Surety for goods of Gild. Punishment to those who rebel against the Gild.

Gild of St. Benedict, "founded [date not stated] in honour of God Almighty, and of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of our Lord Jhesu Christ, in the parish of St. Benedict." As many poor shall be fed as there are members of the Gild. Pilgrims to the Holy Land, St. James's, or to Rome, provided for. Services on deaths within the city, and bread given to the poor; and services on deaths outside the city. Help to poor bretheren. At the feast, when ale is poured out, prayer shall be said, and tankards of ale shall be given to the poor. New members on entering the Gild to pay 6s. 8d., in two instalments. "Morn-speeches" shall be held; and accounts then given by all who have any goods of the Gild on loan. On the Sunday after the feast another morn-speech to be made. Officers chosen and not serving to pay fine. Penalty if one member wrongs another, and for not coming to meetings.

There was also a *Gild of Minstrels and Players* in this city, concerning which we have no exact details.

Sleaford.—This ancient town had a Gild—the Holy Trinity Gild—of great renown. The date of its establishment is unknown; but many circumstances point to its having been founded soon after the Conquest. It must have been in existence before the commencement of the Patent Rolls in the reign of King John, or mention of the conveyance of its property to the brothers in mortmain would be found, as in the case of Boston and other Gilds. It was a rich Gild, having an income of £80 per annum in 1477, when the mention of it occurs. This would be equivalent to £800 at the present day. The Gild was under the management of the principal people in the place; and was famous for its miracle plays, mysteries, and

sacred shows. Perhaps these were next in repute to those of York. There does not appear to have been anything sufficiently distinctive about these to call for detailed note, except as will be immediately stated.

In 1837 there was published : "History of the Holy Trinity Guild at Sleaford, with an Account of its Miracle Plays, Religious Mysteries, and Shows, as practised in the Fifteenth Century ; and an Introduction delineating the changes that have taken place in the Localities of Heath and Fen, Castle and Mansion, Convent and Hall, within the District about Sleaford since that period. To which is added an Appendix, detailing the Traditions which still prevail, and a description of the Lincoln Pageants exhibited during the visit of King James to that City. The whole illustrated by copious notes, critical, historical, and explanatory." By the Rev. G. Oliver, D.D., M.A.S.E., Vicar of Scopwick, &c., Lincoln. 8vo., pp. 135.

The author refers to the fact (p. 61) that all the public amusements of the times were interwoven with religion, and placed under the superintendence of Gilds, by which they were conducted and brought to perfection. "From the most remote period of time the inhabitants of Sleaford and the vicinity practised under that high sanction the diversions which were common to every period of the English monarchy, from the minstrels or jocalators in the reign of Athelston, through the routine of tournaments, the lord of misrule, church ales, Corpus Christi plays, and the frolics of the boy-bishop in the ages of chivalry, the bull and bear baitings, the holk, and the mummeries of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, down to the bulls and other diversions of the present day."

Concerning the "frolics of the boy-bishop," we may take the following account from the same author : "There exists presumptive evidence that the ceremony of the *Episcopus Puerorum* was celebrated at Sleaford ; although it was somewhat unusual out of the limits of a cathedral or collegiate church ; for in digging a grave in Leasingham Churchyard, a diminutive coffin stone was found in the year 1826, only 2½ feet long by 12 inches broad. It was prismatic, and adorned with a beautiful cross fleury in relief ; and undoubtedly

formed a covering to the sarcophagus of a boy-bishop, who died during the continuance of his ephemeral authority. And in the church of Quarrington, at the east end of the north aisle, is an unusually small chapel not more than four feet square, which one cannot but think was intended for the ministration of this juvenile functionary. The solemnity of the *episcopus puerorum*, though it may appear trifling in these days, was conducted with great pomp. A boy was elected on St. Nicholas's Day, who was remarkable for personal beauty, to sustain the high office of a bishop until the 28th day of the same month. He made a solemn procession to the church, attended by many other boys, arrayed in priestly habiliments; and there, dressed in splendid robes, decorated with costly ornaments, and covered with his mitre, he presided with all the solemnity of an actual bishop, during the performance of divine worship. After which he made a collection from house to house, which was boldly demanded as the bishop's subsidy; and he is said to have possessed such unlimited power that all the prebends which fell vacant during his presidency were at his disposal. If he chanced to die in that period he was entitled to all the honours of episcopal interment, and a monument was assigned to convey the remembrance of his honours to posterity."

Strype expresses the opinion that this ceremony was sometimes adopted even in small parish churches; he does not say whether with or without Gild observances.

It has been supposed that a *Gild of Minstrels* existed at Sleaford, but no evidence of the fact is available.

Stamford.—There is the record of one Gild in this ancient town, viz. :

Gild of St. Katherine.—The Ordinances before us bear date 1494; but they are only a re-affirmation of those of a much greater antiquity. The Gild is to abide for ever. Services to be attended by all the bretheren on St. Katherine's Eve and St. Katherine's Day. All shall meet in the hall of the Gild, and the Alderman shall ask new-comers as to their willingness; and they shall take oath of fealty to God, Sts. Mary and Katherine, and the Gild; and shall also swear to pay scot and bear lot, and to keep the Ordinances of the

Gild. They shall be lovingly received, and drink a bout, and so go home. Meetings to be held at 1 o'clock on St. Leonard's Day, or the next Sunday, to deal with the affairs of the Gild. There shall be a grand dinner in the Gild-hall once a year. After dinner an account to be given by every officer. Officers chosen and not serving to be fined. Gildmen must be of good repute, and pay *vis.* and *viijd.* on entering, spread over four years, and afterwards *ijd.* a year for "Wax-shote." Peals of bells to be rung at and after prayers for the souls of the dead; and the ringers to have bread, cheese, and ale. Services and ringings on death of Gildsmen.

There were four other Gild-returns from this town. The Gild of St. Martin has every year a bull; hunts it; sells it; and then feasts. The old custom was kept up in the eighteenth century. See Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes."

Village Gilds.—There were many Gilds in the villages of this county. One example will suffice to show the nature of their regulations.

Gild of Kyllyngholm, founded before 1310.—When a brother or a sister dies, four bretheren shall offer a penny, and each sister shall give a halfpenny loaf. "If a brother or sister is unlucky enough to lose a beast worth half a mark, every brother and every sister shall give a halfpenny towards getting another beast." "If the house of any brother or sister is burnt by mishap, every brother and sister shall give a halfpenny towards a new house." "Moreover, if the house of any brother or sister is broken into by robbers, and goods carried off worth half a mark, every brother and every sister shall give a halfpenny to help him." If one has a guest, and he cannot buy ale, he shall have a gallon of the Gild's best brewing. But the Gild will not allow any tricks in this direction. Whoever is chosen Provost must serve, or must pay.



CHAPTER XXXIV.

GILDS OF MIDDLESEX.

THE Gilds of this county were chiefly, but not entirely, centred in the capital.

London.—In Chapter xiv. I have given an account of a Gild which existed in this City during the Anglo-Saxon period (A.D. 827—1013). It probably had many predecessors during the Roman occupation, but of these no sufficient details have come down to us.

I now propose to give some account of other Gilds in the City, naming them generally in the order of their supposed establishment. I do not here include the 89 gilds, which took the shape of City Companies for the regulation of trades, &c., of which 12 were known as the Great Companies, and 77 as the Minor Companies; while of these latter many have altogether died out. Concerning such of these as now remain ample details are available: as to the great Companies, in Herbert's well-known History; and as to the others, in the newly-issued Report of the Royal Commission into the Livery Companies of the City of London.

Gild of Parish Clerks.—Amongst the Minor Companies was the *Gild of St. Nicholas*, founded in the reign of Henry III. (13th century), which afterwards rendered important services to the City, by preparing the "Bills of Mortality," from which the appearance of the Plague became manifest, and its progress in fatality recorded. These parish clerks (who were anciently poor *real* clerks, *i.e.*, clergy) formed a Gild, or fraternity, and so excelled in church music that ladies and men of quality on this account became members, and on certain days they had public feasts, celebrated with singing and music. Upon working days they attended the schools. Their ancient duty at church was to assist the priest at the altar, sing with him, and read the Epistles.

Gild of the Glovers, founded 1354.—This was a purely secular Gild. The Ordinances now before us purport to be made by the masters and keepers [or wardens] of the Craft of Glovers in the City of London, and the bretheren. The following is a brief abstract only, for the Ordinances themselves are very full and extended:

(1) Every brother shall pay sixteen pence a year, by quarterly payments, towards providing two wax tapers to burn at the high altar of the Chapel of our Lady, in the new Church-haw beside London, and also to the poor of the fraternity who well and truly have paid their quarterage as long as they could.

(2) If any brother be behind of payment of his quarterage by a month after the end of any quarter he shall pay 16 pence, that is to say, 8d. to the old work of the Church of St. Paul of London, and the other 8d. to the box of the fraternitie. Also, as often as any brother be not obedient to the summons of the wardens, or be not present in the "heveyens that folk be dead," and in offering at the funeral of a brother, and in attendance at church with the fraternitie on the feasts of the Annunciation and Assumption, and others, he shall pay 16 pence in like manner.

(3) Every brother shall come to *Placebo* and *Dirige* in the "hevenys of dead folk" in suit or livery of the fraternitie of the year past, and on the morrow to mass, and there offer, in his new livery or suit, upon pain of 16 pence.

(4) If a brother be behind in his quarterage for a year and a day, and though it be in his power to pay it, he maliciously refuse, he shall be summoned before the official of the Consistory Court of London. [See chapter xx.]

(5) If any brother or sister be dead within the City, and have not of his (or her) goods him (or her) to bury, he (or she) shall have burning about his (or her) body five tapers and four torches, at the cost of the bretheren, provided the deceased have continued seven years in the fraternity, &c.

(6) All the bretheren be clothed in one suit, &c.

(7) The Masters, Wardens, and bretheren shall attend and hear mass on the feast of the Assumption, &c.

(8) Every brother shall keep his livery for four years, &c.

(9) The fee for entrance into the fraternity; also the form of oath.

(10) On the day of the feast, when the bretheren have eaten, they shall go together to the Chapel of our Lady before mentioned, and there continue the time of *Placebo* and *Dirige*, and on the

morrow shall attend mass of *Requiem*, and from thence come together to their Hall, on pain of 16d.

(11) If any brother revile another, he shall be fined 6d. or 8d., &c.

(12) All the bretheren, with their wives, shall go together to their meat the Sunday next after Trinity Sunday, &c., &c.

(13) Concerning the admission of apprentices.

(14) Fines for "contrarying" against the rules.

(15) Penalties for disobedience of rules and regulations as to apprentices.

These rules had been signed by twenty-nine brethren, who at the same time were sworn faithfully to keep and fulfil them.

Gild of the Holy Trinity (Aldersgate).—This is one of three Gilds which were founded in connection with St. Botolph without Aldersgate, concerning which much information of interest will be found in Mr. Alderman Staples' pleasant little book, "Notes on St. Botolph without Aldersgate:" London, 1881. Regarding this particular Gild, the duty or obligation of its members was to pay devout honour to the "five wounds of Jesus Christ; the five joys of the Virgin Mary, and the Three Persons in the Glorious Trinity." A charity founded by this Gild exists at the present day, and is administered by the Lord Mayor and Recorder of the City.

Gild of St. Katherine (Aldersgate).—Oath to be taken on entry, and a kiss of love, charity, and peace. Weekly help in poverty, old age, or loss by fire and water. The members' payments were quarterly, 3d., women paying at the same rate as men. Members to go to church on St. Katherine's Day, and afterwards choose officers [no feast mentioned, or apparently contemplated]. Burials were to be at the charge of the Gild, and to be attended by the bretheren. Any brother dying within ten miles of London was to have worshipful burial; all costs being made good by the Gild. Loans were to be made to bretheren out of the Gild stock, on pledge or security. Wax lights were to be found and used on certain festivals; and further services after death. New members only to be admitted by assent on the day of the assembly. Four men were to keep the goods of the Gild and render an account. Assent of all the brotherhood required to any new Gild ordinances. Each of the brother-

hood was to have "a vestement, a chalys, and a massebok," at the price of x. marks.

Gild of Sts. Fabian and Sebastian (Aldersgate).—Same general features as the preceding; with the additional feature that the young were to be helped to get work.

Gild of Garlekhith, founded 1375.—This Gild was established for the worship of God, and to nourish good fellowship. All bretheren must be of good repute. Each was to pay 6s. 8d. on entry. There were to be wardens who should gather in the payments, and yield an account thereof yearly. A livery-suit was to be worn; and the bretheren and sisteren were to hold a feast yearly. Each member was to pay 2s. yearly. There were to be four meetings touching the Gild's welfare to be held in each year. There were to be free gifts to the Gild by the bretheren of "what hym lyketh." Ill-behaved bretheren were to be put out of the Gild. On the death of any, all the others were to join in the burial service, and make offerings under penalty. In cases of dispute the matter was to be laid before the wardens. Any member disobeying their award should be put out of the Gild. Weekly help was to be afforded to all members of the Gild of seven years' standing, in old age and in sickness; also, aid to those wrongfully imprisoned. New members were to make oath to keep the Gild ordinances. Every brother chosen warden must serve, or pay 40s.

Gild of the Blacksmiths.—The Ordinances before us do not bear date until 1434. They are made by the Masters and Wardens of the whole Company of the Craft "in the worship" of St. Loy. In all material respects they resemble those of the Glovers.

Gild of the Shearmen [Clothworkers].—This is an ancient Company arising out of interests connected with the woollen manufacture. The Ordinances before us bear date 1452, and recite that "the wardens and freemen of the Craft for the more encrease and continuation of brotherly love and good example unto the honour of God, our Lady St. Mary, and all Saints, by licence of the Mayor and Commonalty the City of London form a religious brotherhood amongst themselves for the sustentation of a perpetual light of thirteen tapers to burn in the church of the Augustinian Friars in London before the image of

our Lady." This, however, seems to have been a fraternity inside the general Gild, the Ordinances of the latter being very minute in detail, but to the same general purport as the Glovers.

The Gild of the Water-bearers.—This was formerly an important body in the City of London (as its counterparts still are in some of the Continental cities of Europe, especially Lisbon); but it dates back probably to a time anterior to that at which Peter Moris (the Dutchman) erected his water-works at Old London Bridge; and certainly before Sir Hugh Myddleton brought his New River water into the City, which was in 1620. The Ordinances before us purport to be made in 1496 by the Wardens of the whole fellowship of the brotherhood of St. Christopher of the Water-bearers founded within the Augustine Friars. There is nothing in them requiring special comment.

German Gilds in London.—But the most extraordinary feature was the existence in London, at a very early period, of three Gilds of *Germans residing and trading in London*. Speaking generally, their objects were good fellowship, and where need might arise, the succour of the poor members of the Gilds. These were:—

(1) *The Brotherhood of the Holy Blood of Wilsnak in Saxony*. The date of the formation of this Gild is not known, but its Ordinances were enrolled in the Commissary Court of London, April 1, 1459:

In the name of God that is Almyghti and of our Lady Seynt Mary his moder, and for the blessid blode of his sone Jesus Christ which is by all Cristen people wurshipped at Wilsnak, and opynly called the Holy Blode of Wylnak, and of all the Seyntes of Hevyne, the xiiijth day of Aprill the yere of our Lord God Ml.cccc.lix. and the yere of King Henry the Sixt. xxxvij. A fraternitie in the special honour of the seid Holy Blode of Wylnak and of all the Holy Seynts of Hevyn is ordayned founded and devised in the Chirche of the Crossid Freres [Crutched Friars] of London for to norish encrece and engender love and peas amonge gode Christen people in the fourme sewyng, that is to weten.

Then is set forth that the entrance fee was to be *xxd.*, with other Ordinances after the manner of English Gilds of the period, and the following concerning the benefits receivable:—

Also, if any brother or suster of the same Bretherhede by fortune shall [fall] yn naturall sikenesse by visitacion of God so that he nor she mought labore and travel to helpe them selfe, the same foke by warnyng to the maysters for the tyme beyng the same day of the sekenesse comyng, or on the morow at forthest, shall have xx*d.* every wike sewing [ensuing] unto the same seke be recovered of the sekenesse and that trewly be payed at every wikes withoute any longer delay.

(2) *The Brotherhood of the Holy Blood of Wilsnak in Saxony*, held in Austin Friars. Date of foundation not recorded; Ordinance enrolled in Commissary Court of London, Dec. 8, 1490. It is recited in the Ordinances that the Fraternity with “oon aasent and comen accorde for the helthe and salvacion of our synfull sowles and for pease loue and charite to be kept with our even cresten, have proposed to holde maynten and to kepe a Fraternyte within the chirch and cloyster of the Freres Austyn within the Cite of London in the worship and honor of the foresaid holy blode,” &c. The Ordinances as to benefits to be granted to the brothers is as follows:—

And also whan eny of our brethern happith to fall sike of som sikenesse that comith of Gods hande, and not by no fawte of good governaunce and good gydyng, he shall have for his sustenacion after that he hath lien vij. dayes xx*d.* every weke as long as he lieth sike, and his benefacte and charite shall perseyve as moche the moost as the lesse, to thend this charite and almosse be not mynysshed be no wise, and whatever brother of the same brotherhod that shall owe to the same as moche as cometh to more money than iiij*d.* ob. he shall not have nor perceyve the forseyd benefacte and charite of the said Brotherhod.

The other Ordinances of this Gild are particularly interesting.

(3) *The Fraternity of Saint Katheryn*, which is stated to have been “founded and ordeyned by Duchemenne iiij^{xx} yeres passed in the Crosse Fryers in the Cite of London.” This was enrolled in the Commissary Court of London Oct. 25, 1495 (10 Hen. VII.); and if it had only been founded by the Dutchmen eighty years previously, as its preamble recites, then it belongs to a later period than that of which we are writing. Another Ordinance, reciting that its earlier Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Rules had been “specyfied and

declared in Duych tong," points, however, to a probably earlier origin. The names enrolled look remarkably English-like for even the fifteenth century.

Staines.—In 1456 a licence was granted to John Lord Berners, Sir John Wenlock, and other parishioners of Staines, to found a Gild or Fraternity in honour of God and the Virgin Mary, in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, in the Church of Staines; which Gild should consist of two Wardens and a certain number of brethren and sisters, who were incorporated by the King's Letters Patent of that date. (*Vide* Pat. 34 Hen. VI. m. 12.)

In 1548 the lands belonging to this Gild were valued at £11 17s. 6d. per annum, including 6s. 8d. for a Chamber called the Chantry Priests' Chamber. (*Vide* Chantry Roll in the Augmentation Office.)

These lands paid quit-rents to the manors of Grovebarns and Iveney Court.



CHAPTER XXXV.

GILDS OF NORFOLK.

THIS county was remarkable for the number of its Gilds, every principal town having many, and most of the villages one or more. The following is believed to be a complete return of the Gilds existing in 1388-9. All the towns are easy of identification.

East Wynch.—In this town (or village) there was the following:—

Gild of Est Wynch, founded 1377.—Four meetings shall be held every year. Officers to be chosen by picked men. Services for dead, and offerings. Masses for the souls of the dead. Allowances to members in sickness, viz., "a lof, and a potel of ale, and mes of kechen [stuff]."

Lynn.—The Gilds existing in this then famous seaport (at the date above named) were the following—the chief features of each being noted.

Gild of the Nativity of St. Fohn Baptist, founded 1316.—Three meetings shall be held every year, to which every brother and sister must come under penalty. Officers shall be chosen by picked men ; those not serving to pay a fine. The stewards shall find sureties for the goods of the Gild, and render an account at the yearly general meeting. Every feast shall be begun with a prayer ; the Gild-candle shall burn the while ; and all that are there shall be noiseless. Services for the dead, and offerings. New members shall undertake to keep the ordinances, and shall pay the usual house-fees and entrance-money. Masses for the souls of the dead. Allowances to officers on feast days. The Dean shall be fined if he fail to summon any of the bretheren. The Gild shall go to church in procession on the day of their yearly meeting, and hear mass, and make offerings. Help to poor bretheren and sisteren. The funds of the Gild at this date appear to have amounted to £4 1s.—this indeed representing a large amount of our present coinage—held by its four principal officers. Another Gild with the same name is mentioned later.

Gild of St. Peter (at Lenne), founded 1329 [or 1339].—Four meetings shall be held every year, at each of which every brother and sister shall pay a halfpenny towards maintaining a light burning during divine service. Penalty for not coming to any meeting. The Dean shall be fined if he fail to summon any. Officers shall be chosen by picked men ; those chosen and not serving shall be fined. Services for the dead, and offerings ; and bretheren not coming, if able, shall be fined. Masses for the soul. The Alderman shall deliver the goods to the Stewards, upon surety given to render account thereof at the yearly general meeting. Allowances to the officers on feast days. New-comers shall undertake to keep these statutes ; and shall at once pay the usual entrance-money or find sureties. The Dean's salary *vjd.* in the year. Any brother or sister wronging another shall be fined. Help to be given to poor bretheren.

Gild of St. Nicholas in Lenne Petri (West Lynn), founded 1359.—Four meetings in the year, whoever grumbles shall be fined. No one shall enter the buttery where the ale lies.

Gild of the Purification, in Bishop's Lynn, founded 1367.—This was a social Gild “in ye honuraunce of ihesu crist of heuene, And of his

moder seinte marie, and of alle halowene, and speciallike of ye Purificacioun of oure lady seint marie." Its features were like other of the Religio-Social Gilds of the town.

The Shipmanes Gild, founded 1368.—Three meetings shall be held every year, on days named, or as the Alderman shall appoint. Every brother must come to every meeting, if able. The Dean shall be fined if he fail to summon any. Officers chosen and not serving shall be fined. New-comers [members] shall pay the usual house fees and entrance-money. Services for the dead, and offerings. The bellman shall summon all. Masses for souls of the dead. Unruly brothers shall be fined. One wronging another shall be fined, and shall make peace. Penalty for disclosing the affairs of the Gild. The Stewards shall render an account of the goods of the Gild, and of the year's profits, at the yearly general meeting, under penalty to be paid by themselves or their sureties. No Gild-brother shall give pledge or become surety for another, in any plea or suit, without leave of the Alderman and others. The Alderman, &c., shall do their best to adjust the quarrel; but if unable, shall give leave to make suit at law. Fine for disobedience. Allowances to the officers on feast days. Help to poor bretheren. Payments shall be made for every voyage; and a yearly payment if no voyage made. The ale-chamber not to be entered. New-comers shall swear to maintain the Ordinances of the Gild. New-comers must undertake to come to the yearly meetings, if at home, and must make their payments. The liveryhood shall be kept for two years. On death of a brother, all the rest shall be summoned, and shall come to the service in their liveryhoods, and make offerings. None shall leave until the service is done; fine for default.

A new Ordinance was made for this Gild in 1381, viz., burial service in the case of any brother dying out of town. In 1382 another new Ordinance, viz., burial service for those dying in West Lynn and South Lynn.

It is clear that this was a Gild of a superior order, more after the nature of a Merchant-Gild.

Gild of St. Fohn Baptist, in Bishop's Lynn, founded 1372.—This partook of the general character of the Social Gilds of the town,

except that there seemed to be no special provision for the poor members in sickness, &c. The ordinances provided that there should be no quarrelling during any feast-time or meeting. Moneys were to be contributed towards the Gild-stock, and the ale.

Gild of St. John Baptist, in West Lynn, founded in 1374.—Services for dead, and offerings. The Dean shall buy waste bread with these offerings, and give it [to the poor]. Penalty on anyone disputing any of these Ordinances.

Gild of St. George the Martyr, founded in 1376.—A priest shall be found to serve at the altar of St. George. Candles and torches shall be found to burn during the service, and at burials. Services for the dead, and offerings. Services shall be held, though the brother or sister shall have died outside the town. Masses for souls of the dead. Help to poor bretheren and sisteren. Four meetings to be held every year, to which every brother and sister shall come under penalty. Officers shall be chosen by picked men; those chosen and not serving to be fined. Allowance to officers on feast days. The Gild shall go to church on the day of yearly meeting, and hear mass and make offerings. The affairs of the Gild not to be disclosed. The Stewards to find sureties for the goods, and to render account at the yearly general meeting. Every feast shall be begun with a prayer, the Gild-light burning the while; and they that are there making no noise nor jangling. New members admitted only at the yearly general meeting, and with the assent of all; save good men from the country. New members shall undertake to keep the Ordinances, and shall pay the usual house-fees as well as entrance-money. If any quarrel arise, it shall be told to the Alderman, who shall do his best to settle it. Livery-hoods to be worn at the meetings, and at every burial service. Breakers of the Ordinances, after three fines shall be put out of the Gild. Salary of the Clerk *iiis. ivd.*, and of the Dean *ijs.* the year. The funds of the Gild consisted of £3 3s.

Gild of St. Thomas of Canterbury (in Lenne), founded 1376.—The Gild, all fairly arrayed, shall meet on St. Thomas's Day, and hear mass, and make offerings. There shall be four other general meetings in the course of each year. An Alderman shall be chosen,

and four Stewards, and a Dean and Clerk. A large wax candle shall be kept burning. The order of burial services defined. Wrongdoers shall be put out. New-comers shall pay 5s. each. If any become poor, or have loss by sea, or by fire, or otherwise, help shall be given. Assent given to these Ordinances. Wages of Clerk to be iij^s., and of Dean xvij^d. for the year.

The Gild of Young Scholars, founded 1383.—Gifts were received in support of the Gild. Burial services defined. Help in case of poverty, loss at sea, or other mishap. Three speakings together [assemblies] of the Gild shall be held every year; accounts shall be then rendered. All the brethren shall go to church on one day in the year, and hear mass and make offerings. Misdoers shall be put out. Officers shall be chosen. It was stated that all the goods of the Gild had been spent, but more were hoped for.

Gild of St. Thomas of Canterbury (at Lenne).—Four meetings to be held every year, to which all must come under penalty. New-comers shall pay the usual house-fees. Attendance at meetings must be punctual. Services for the dead, and offerings. Masses for the soul. Sureties and entrance-money for new-comers. Allowances to the officers on feast days. Help to the poor. Allowances to the sick. No noise to be made during the feast time. The remaining ordinances resembled those of the other Gilds of the town.

Gild of St. James, in North Lynn.—Four meetings in the year. Three candles to be kept burning during divine service. Help to needy bretheren and sisteren. Unruly speech shall be punished by a fine. Other features general.

Gild of St. Edmund, in North Lynn.—A Religio-Social Gild with special features.

Gild of Candlemass, in North Lynn.—No special features.

Gild of St. Lawrence, in Bishop's Lynn.—It had no special features differing from the Social Gilds of the town.

Gild of St. Edmund, in Bishop's Lynn.—This again had no special features. The entrance-money iiij^s.

Gild of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (another).—Three meetings shall be held every year, to which every brother and sister must come under penalty. The Dean shall be fined if he fail to

summon any. New-comers shall pay the usual house-fees. Services for the dead, and offerings. Penalty for betraying the affairs of the Gild. Officers chosen and not serving shall be fined. Masses for souls of the dead. The ale chamber not to be entered. Salaries of the Dean and the Clerk provided for. The Stewards to find sureties for the goods of the Gild, and render an account at the yearly general meeting. No man shall stay in the Gild-house after the Alderman has left. Allowances to the officers on Gild-days, and to sick bretheren and sisteren. Help to poor bretheren and sisteren. Entrance fee ijs., "and find ij. borowes for ye catelle."

Gild of St. Thomas of Canterbury, in Bishop's Lynn.—This was on the same basis as the other Social Gilds of the town. A few special Ordinances obtained. If one brother belie another, he shall be fined. If anyone is foul-mouthed to the Alderman at any meeting, he shall be fined. If anyone wrong another, he shall be fined. None shall come to the feast in a tabard, nor in a cloak, nor with legs bare, nor barefoot. If anyone make a noise during the feast, he shall do penance by holding the rod, else pay a fine. No one shall sleep, nor keep the ale-cup to himself. Help to poor bretheren and sisteren [record incomplete].

Gild of the Holy Cross, in Bishop's Lynn.—The chief distinctive feature of this Gild was that allowances were made to the bretheren and sisteren during sickness, but also while on pilgrimage. No brother was to go to law with another without leave of the Alderman.

Gild of St. Anthony (in Lenne).—Founded (date uncertain) "in the Worchepe of God of heuen, and of his modir seynt Mari, and alle the holy Company of heuen, and souerengly of the Noble confessour seynt Antony." The Gild shall meet in church and hear mass and make offerings. There shall be four other general meetings of the Gild in each year. New-comers (members) shall pay 5s. each. A wise Alderman shall be chosen, and 4 trusty Stewards, and a summoning Dean, and a Clerk. Burial services on death of members, and offerings. In cases of loss of cattle, or personal sickness, help to be given. Wages of the Clerk and Dean to be xij*d.* each "for his trauaile in the yere."

Gild of St. Leonard.—There shall be four general meetings every

year; at the first there shall be chosen an Alderman and four Stewards, a Dean, and a Clerk. New-comers shall pay 3s. each. Burial services defined. In case of loss by sea, or other mishap, help shall be given. If death outside the town, the body shall be fetched at cost of the Gild. Prisoners shall be visited and comforted. Rebels against canon law shall be put out.

Gild of the Purification.—The Gild shall meet on Candlemas-day, and have besides three meetings every year. No special features. Help to those in trouble.

Gild of St. Mary.—Services for the dead and offerings. Masses for the souls of the dead. No special features.

Gild of St. Katherine.—A candle shall be kept burning in the church of St. Margaret; and on the Feast of St. Katherine offerings shall be made. New members to pay 5s. entrance-fee. Masses for the souls of the dead. No special features.

Gild of St. James.—Help to poor bretheren and sisteren. No special features.

Gild of the Conception, in Bishop's Lynn.—There were to be four meetings in the year; every brother and sister was to pay 1d. towards finding a light on festival days; and any member summoned and not attending was to be fined; remainder of the features in common with other Gilds of the town.

Most of the preceding are seen to be religious Gilds—perhaps all except the “Shipmanes” [*i.e.* Shipmasters] of 1368. The following were of the mercantile class:—

Gild of the Holy Trinity [Merchants Gild].—This was the great mercantile Gild of the town, and had very considerable possessions in land, houses, and other property. It was reputed to have taken its rise in the reign of King John, in the sixth year of whose reign the Gild received Letters Patents authorising one of its body to be mayor of the town. The Gild itself was unquestionably of older date. At the date of the Reformation the Gild was sustaining thirteen chaplains, “daily and yearly to pray, as well for the King, his ancestors, and for the peace and welfare of his kingdom, as for the souls of the Aldermen, bretheren, and benefactors of the said Gild, also for the souls of the faithful deceased.”

The Gild of Shoemakers.—No details available.

The Red Gild.—The particular objects of this Gild, or even the circumstances which led to the adoption of its name, have hitherto defied all inquiry.

The Gild of St. William, trading to North Bern. This was probably a gild of merchants trading to North Bergen (Norway). Lynn had carried on a considerable trade with the North of Europe from a very early period, and many Lynn merchants resided in those parts. There is in the Corporation records a letter in Latin, bearing date 1305, from Bartholomew, the King of Norway's Chancellor, to the Mayor of Lynn, in behalf of Thurkill and other merchants residing there. It was customary for the merchants of Lynn to have a consul of their own—an Alderman—appointed for Norway. To this end a royal warrant was necessary. Here is a copy of such a document issued by Henry V. (first half of fifteenth century) :—

HENRY, by the grace of God, King of England and of France, and Lord of Ireland.

To our trusty and well-beloved the Mayor, Aldermen, and other merchants inhabiting within our town of Lynn, shewed unto us, that by the old privilege among you, used in exercising the sale of your merchandises in the lands and countries of Denmark and Norway, ye have an ancient custom to have an Alderman chosen by election among you, to be ruler and governor of your Company in the said countries, and to see good rule and order kept amongst you there, which we woll be content to help and see to be holden for the increasing and augmentation of the common weal and prosperity of you and all other our true subjects ; we having the same in our good remembrance, be content and woll, that ye godre and assemble toguider, and among you chuse such oon to be your said Alderman, as ye shall think convenient, good, honest, and sufficient for the premisses : and to use, have, enjoy, and occupy the liberties and franchises in this cause heretofore accustomed. Yeven under our Signet at our manor of Greenwich, the 18th day of July, the fifth year of our reign."

It will be remembered in this connection that Lynn was one of the trading stations of the Hanseatic League.

There seem to have been several Gild-halls in the town, viz., those of the Gilds of the *Trinity* and of *St. George* respectively, and it is supposed of various others. In vol. i. of Richards' "History of Lynn" will be found many additional details of interest regarding the Gilds of this town.



CHAPTER XXXVI.

GILDS OF NORFOLK (*continued*).

NORWICH.—The Gilds existing in this important city in 1388-9 were:—

Fraternity of St. Katherine, commenced in 1307.—All the members of the Gild were to go in procession on the day of St. Katherine, and make offerings; penalty on absent members. On the day following, mass, &c. Burial services to be attended and offerings made—the duties of the lettered and of the unlettered bretheren and sisteren specifically defined. Bretheren dying within eight miles of the city to be brought in for burial, or at least the usual services done. Poor bretheren to be helped; and causes of quarrel to be laid before the Gild. Fine on refusal to take office. A liveryhood to be worn, and all the members to dine together on the Gild-day. Admission of new members only by common consent. Goods of the Gild enumerated.

The Tailors' Gild, founded 1350.—The Gild to meet together, and the next day a mass of requiem. The bretheren to obey summons of Alderman to audit accounts; fine if absent. Meeting after Easter to choose officers, &c. Payments to be made to sexton and clerk; help to the poor and maimed. Burial services and offerings, to extend to those dying within seven miles of the city. Service for those dying abroad. Oath to be taken by Gild-members. Alderman to be chosen. At meetings a candle to be kept alight, and a prayer said. A summoner to be chosen, and requited by quittance of the usual payments. A fee of 1d. to be paid to the

Bedel on entrance to the Gild. The Gild had no land, but was maintained by the charges levied under the Ordinances.

Gild of St. Mary, commenced in 1360.—It was of the Religious type. The bretheren and sisteren of the Gild, as long as there should be twelve of them living, were to provide a candle and torches, to be used on certain festivals named “in wyschiþe of crist and his moder.” There is a note of the masters of the Gild and of the property in hand.

Fraternity of Holy Trinity, in the Cathedral, begun in 1364.—A solemn service to be held on the eve of the Feast of the Trinity. A mass of requiem shall be had, and offerings made. Burial services and offerings. Help to poor bretheren. Fines for absence from meetings of Gild. Goods of the Gild.

The Carpenters' Gild (founded 1375), in honour of the Holy Trinity.—A yearly meeting to be held, which shall begin with prayers. A yearly procession and offerings; burial services and offerings, to extend to all bretheren dying within seven miles of the town; service for those dying abroad. Help to those fallen into poverty or mishap, if not brought about through folly or riotous living. Fine for non-fulfilment of Ordinances unless there be good excuse. Neither the King's right nor the law to be encroached upon. The Gild appears to have been entitled to gifts by certain masons—probably of another Gild.

Gild of the Pelyters [Furriers], founded 1376.—Two candles, dressed with flowers, were to be yearly offered to St. William's tomb, by a procession of a boy and two good men. Only three excuses were to be allowed for non-attendance at mass, viz., being in “ye kyngges seruise, er for stronge sekenesse, or twenty myle duellynge fro yis syte,” unless it were otherwise willed. No Ordinance to prejudice the King's right, or the law. On the morrow of the Gild-day the Gild to hear a mass in requiem; after the mass to go to an inn, audit accounts and choose officers. The officers to be chosen by picked men. Bretheren or sisteren fallen into trouble or misease, to have weekly help; but not so if brought on by their own folly. Fine on refusal to take office. Burial services and offerings, extending to deaths within seven miles of the city. An annual feast to be

held. Fine for not attending meetings. Admission of new-comers to be regulated by "ye Alderman and xij bretheryn." The common bellman to summon the bretheren to meet on the morrow of the Gild-day. The Gild (it was declared) had no land, but was maintained by charges levied, and by legacies, and other gifts.

The Poor Men's Gild, founded 1380, "in honor of oure lord Jhesu crist, and of oure lady seinte marie, and in wursshyp of seyn Austyn."—A light to be found in honour of St. Austin; mass and offerings at the same time. Help to those fallen poor, sick, or in other mischance. All dying within seven miles of the city to have burial services.

Gild of St. Botulph, founded 1384.—The meeting of the fraternity to be held on the Sunday next after the Epiphany; next day they were to have a mass of requiem. Burials to be attended by the bretheren, and offerings made. Help to the poor bretheren and sisteren was to be made by the members at the rate of "a ferthyng in ye woke." The goods of the Gild are enumerated.

Fraternity of St. Christopher, founded 1384.—Prayer to be said at every meeting for the Church, peace, Pope, Cardinals, "ye patriak of Jerhusalem," "for ye holy londe and ye holy crosse, yat godd for his myght and his mercy bryng it oute of hethen power into reule of holy chirche," archbishops, bishops, parsons, king, queen, dukes, earls, barons, bachelors, knights, squires, citizens, burgesses, franklins, tillers, craftsmen, widows, maidens, wives, commonalities, shipmen, pilgrims, unbelievers, our fathers' and mothers' souls, and for all of this Gild. The Gild-day was to be on the Sunday before the Feast of St. Christopher. No Ordinance shall be against the common law. There was to be a yearly mass of requiem, and offerings; also offerings at burials; and two poor men to carry torches. Poor bretheren were to be helped. This was evidently a Gild of a higher order than many in this city.

Gild of St. George, founded 1385.—The day of St. George was always to be kept, and offerings made on that day; next day a mass of requiem. Burial services to be attended by the bretheren, and offerings made. Weekly help to poor bretheren. Goods of the Gild enumerated.

The Saddlers' and Spurriers' Gild, founded 1385.—The Ordinances to be kept so long as twelve of the Gild lived. Two torches to be kept burning at the elevation of the host at high mass. The Gild meeting to be held on the first Sunday after Trinity, and the members to have a livery. All to meet the evening before to pray for their own souls. Next morning mass shall be heard, and offerings made, and all shall go in procession to the Nunnery of Carrow. On death within the city all shall be at the dirge, and two poor men with them. The same at interment; and offerings and gifts to be made. Service with the bretheren on death within three miles of the city; and service on death of one dwelling beyond, at Carrow.

Brotherhood of Barbers.—Torches and other lights, &c., shall be offered on Midsummer-day. Torches were to be kept burning during high mass. The Gild appears to have been dedicated to "seynt John the Babtis."

Oxenburghe (Oxburgh; Oxborough).—There were eight Gilds in this town (now village) at the same date, of which the following may be taken as a type:—

Gild of St. John Baptist, founded 1307.—The officers, bretheren, and sisteren shall come to evensong on the day of St. John the Baptist, and make offerings. Help to those "in trouble" was to be given at the rate of one farthing a day; one halfpenny on Sunday. Prayers for the dead.

Gild of St. Peter, founded 1378.—The members of the Gild to assemble at evensong on St. Peter's Day, and make offerings. Help to those in trouble—rate not distinctly specified. Fine for betraying the affairs of the Gild.

Wynnale (Wyggendale, now Wiggenshall).—The Gilds existing in this town or village, which was located near King's Lynn and appears to have been of some importance, were:

Gild of the Assumption, founded 1384.—Latin prayers to be said out of the Church offices. English prayer of the Gild for the Church; for the King, Queen, and Baronage; for the Pope and the Patriarch; for the Holy Land; for the fruit of the earth; for shipmen and travellers; for the founders of the Gild; and for the souls of the dead and living. Search to be made for anyone dying sud-

denly, by water or by land : and he shall have burial services. Any one belying another shall be fined.

Gild of the Holy Trinity, founded 1387.—Four meetings shall be held every year, at which payments to be made for lights. Latin prayers shall be said out of Church offices. Burials at the cost of the Gild. Drowned men shall be searched for.

Gild de Cranbone, founded 1387.—Latin prayers to be said out of Church offices. English prayer of the Gild for the Church, Pope, Cardinals, Patriarch, Archbishop of Canterbury, and other Bishops ; King and Queen, and the commoners of the realm. Burials at cost of Gild. Every quarrel to be brought before two bretheren. Two meetings shall be held every year.

Gild of St. Peter.—Two meetings shall be held every year. All shall go to church with a garland of oak leaves. Service for the dead, and offerings. Bread to be given, and masses sung for the souls of the dead. Men dying by water or land to be searched for and buried. Meat and drink to be given at yearly meeting. The funds of the Gild then (1388) consisted of 11s.

Great Yarmouth.—King John in his Charter to this borough, granted 1209, gave the privilege of a Merchant Gild to be held in this town. We have not met with any very early records of it. But in the 6th Elizabeth (1563) there are notices, which, however, only monly called the Guild-hall, near unto the church, containing in length from east to west within the walls 76 feet, and in breadth 22 feet, which being much ruinated, was in the year of our Lord God 1544 (in the 33 Henry VIII.) by the town very substantially repaired and amended, and the walls new buttressed and supported, and the roof, which is a very fair one, sometime belonging to Mettingham College [near Bungay], upon the suppression thereof, was brought to Yarmouth, and placed upon the said Hall, and covered with lead very neatly. In this hall in times past, viz., within my remembrance [he wrote probably about the end of the reign of Elizabeth], was yearly holden on Trinity Sunday a Solemn Feast for the whole Brotherhood and Fellowship of the Society, called the Blessed Trinity, which by our Charter of King John in the year 1207, was granted unto us by the name of the Merchants Guild, whereunto

every one of this Common Council, at his first admission and oath taken, doth still acknowledge himself a brother of that Society. Which said feast was for the most part yearly holden at the costs of four of that Brotherhood successively according to their course of incoming, maintained ; over whom the senior bailiff for the year presiding was and is nominated Alderman. The Hall aforesaid being at that time richly hanged and adorned with cloth of arras, tapestry, and other costly furniture, not sparing any dainty fare which might be had for money."

At which Feast all private quarrels and emulations were heard and ended in the glory of God and mutual love amongst neighbours : for which cause, in the primitive time of the Church, such Gilds or Fraternities were by the laws Ecclesiastical ordained, and by the laws civil, among all Christian common-weals, used, practised, and confirmed."



CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE GILDS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

THE Gilds of this most northern county of ancient Britain are fairly numerous, and are full of interest. They bear traces of the early Border feuds.

Berwick-upon-Tweed.—The Gild of this ancient Border town and county—which may now be appropriately included in Northumberland—possesses a feature of special interest, as illustrating the process of absorbing many separate fraternities into one Corporate Gild. This event occurred in A.D. 1283-4—indicating necessarily an earlier existence for the Gilds so absorbed. I shall give the substance only.

Statutes of the Gild ordained by the pleasure of the burgesses, so that, where many bodies are found side by side in one place, they may become one, and have one will, and in the dealings of one toward another have a strong and hearty love. All separate Gilds, heretofore existing in the borough, shall be brought to an end. The goods rightfully belonging to them shall be handed over to this Gild.

No other Gild shall be allowed in the borough. All shall be as members having one head, one in counsel, one body, strong and friendly. Brethren shall bequeath something to the Gild if they make wills. Men, not being brethren, making a bequest, shall have the benefit of the Gild. Foul words to incur fine, and if repeated, other penalties. Heavy fines shall be paid for bodily hurt done. Weapons shall not be brought to Gild meetings. "Commit no nuisance." New members, not sons or daughters of Gildmen, to pay 40s. Whoever shall fall into old age or poverty, or into hopeless sickness, and has no means of his own, shall have such help as the Aldermen, Dean, and Brethren of the Gild think right, and such as the means of the Gild enable to be given. Doweries shall be given to poor maidens, either on marriage or on going into a religious house. Poor brethren shall be buried at the cost of the Gild. Help shall be given to brethren charged with wrong-doing. Burgesses who disclaim the Gild shall not be helped by it. All brothers shall come to meetings at the sounding of the trumpet. No lepers shall come into the borough, a place being kept for them outside the town. No dung nor dust-heaps shall be put near the banks of the Tweed. "Silence in Court." Every well-to-do burgess must keep a horse—Handmills are not to be used—the miller must have his share. No townsman (out of the Gild) shall trade in wool or hides unless he is free of the Gild; but stranger-merchants may do so. Underhand dealings in the way of trade shall be punished. The market shall not be forestalled as to ship-borne food-stuffs. If anyone buys goods, misled by false top samples, amends must be made. The price of mutton was fixed for the varying seasons of the year. Butchers shall not speculate in wool or hides. The price of ale was also fixed. Brokers to be chosen by the Town, to which they were to present a cask of wine every year; their names to be registered. Goods for consumption shall not be bought up by hucksters before the bell rings. Forestalling the market not allowed; wool and hides not to be engrossed by a few buyers. No burgess to get an outsider to plead for him against a neighbour. The Gild shall be one and undivided. How the commonalty of Berwick shall be ruled. The Mayor and Provosts shall be chosen by the com-

monalty. Bewrayers [betrayers] of the Gild shall be heavily punished. No skinner nor glover shall cut any wool from the skins during the summer months, but all skins to be sold as they are. Buyers of herrings shall share and share alike. Regulation for carriage of wine casks. Regulation as to quantity of beer to be brewed by alewives. Butchers shall not forestall the market. Leathers must be sold in open market. No one shall have more than two pairs of mill-stones. Local custom as to sharing goods bought. The place and times for buying and taking away sea-borne goods. Dues from foreign merchants to go to the Gild-stock. Out-dwelling brethren of the Gild must deal in the town on market-days.

This is probably the best type extant of the restrictions of the Town or Corporate Gilds of the Middle Ages.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—In this ancient borough (once a stronghold of the Roman invader) there are traces of early Gilds. I shall here present in outline a few of the more important.

Merchant Adventurers.—King John, in the 17th year of his reign (1215)—it is to be observed, one year before his grant to the merchants of London—constituted a Society or Gild of Free Merchants; the members of which (amongst other privileges) were exempted from pleading anywhere without the walls of the town, to any plea but that concerning foreign tenures. He released them also from the duties of toll, lastage, pontage, and passage, in all the sea-ports of his dominions at home and abroad—empowering the Mayor of Newcastle, or Sheriff of Northumberland, to give them reparation for whatever injury they might sustain. This Charter was afterwards confirmed by Henry III., Edward II., and Edward III., with the addition of new privileges.

This Gild assumed at an early period to regulate the trade of the town and port. When in 1281 an Italian merchant was found making shipments of wool and leather, attention was called to the fact that members of this Merchants' Gild ought to have like privileges. So again, when, in 1343, other burgesses in the town were permitted to purchase merchandises at prime cost out of ships in their port, for their private use, the Gild regarded this as an infringement of its privileges.

But the importance of the Gild came into greater prominence when Edward III. removed the staple of English wool from the Flemings—for then Newcastle became one of the nine staple towns, and all wools of the growth of Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Durham, and Richmondshire, were commanded to be shipped for foreign ports there. Richard II. in 1397 granted leave to the merchants of this Gild to carry woofels, and other commodities, to any other foreign port besides Calais, on paying custom and subsidy. Newcastle, at this date, carried on a considerable trade with the Baltic ports.

In 1480 the Society of Merchants in Newcastle subscribed a written agreement for the better government of the body, under which they bound themselves to meet and hold their courts monthly at the Maison Dieu Hall, on the Sandhill, and their annual gathering on the Thursday next after "Mid-fast" Sunday. The Society to go in procession on Corpus Christi Day. Those members holding rank, as the Mayor, Sheriff, and Aldermen, were to attend with their officers and servants upon the Holy Sacrament; and according to seniority of office were to be the principals in the solemn procession, in which the latest made burgess was to walk foremost. A play was annually enacted. In 1504 the privileges of the Gild regarding the shipment of north-country wools to various parts of Europe were enlarged.

In 1546 Edward VI. granted a Charter to this Gild, under its expanded title of "The Governor, Assistants, Wardens, and Fellowship of Merchant Adventurers of the Town and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne." They had at an earlier date been known as "Merchant Venturers in the Ports of Brabant beyond the Seas."

A peculiar feature of this Gild was that it consisted of three principal branches of members, viz. :—

1. *Drapers*, or merchants in woollen cloth. In an Ordinance for the government of the town confirmed by Edward III. in 1342, this branch is referred to as one of the "Twelve Mysteries." There is in the records of the town an Ordinance under date 1512 which throws some light upon the constitution of this branch. In the following century the parent Gild was disposed to claim the more

important privileges of the branch, and to treat its section of members as being entitled to inferior privileges.

2. *Mercers*, or merchants of silk. There seems to be no available date for determining the distinct fellowship of the members of this branch of the Gild.

3. *Boothmen*, or merchants of corn. Here again no distinct records seem to exist determining the separate existence of this branch. There are some scattered references.

I think the strong inference is that the twelve mysteries or trades had a separate existence earlier than the Charter of King John, and that they were consolidated by that charter, or some earlier one, into this Merchants' Gild or Company. It seems, however, equally probable that but three of the early mysteries so united; for there were yet nine other Gilds claiming separate existence, which I now proceed briefly to notice. It is more than probable that the twelve ancient mysteries had descended direct from the Roman period.

The Merchant Gild still exists. As recently as 1823 its Hall or Court, above the Maison Dieu, on the Sandhills, was pulled down and rebuilt. This must be one of the oldest incorporations now existing in Great Britain.

Skinner & Glovers.—The earliest known Ordinance of the Skinners is dated January 20, 1437. The fellowship were to meet on the Tuesday after Michaelmas every year, unless that festival should fall on a Monday, and then on the Tuesday seven-night following, to choose their stewards and pass their accounts. Amongst the different orders it promulgated and recorded was one forbidding the use of tobacco at its meetings, under a penalty of 3d. for every offence. The Ordinance of the Glovers, dated January, 1436, enjoined them to go together in procession at the feast of Corpus Christi, in a livery, and play their play at their own charge; to choose annually three stewards; that apprentices should serve seven years, on pain of forfeiting 6s. 8d. "to the light of the said craft;" that no Scotsman born should be taken apprentice, nor allowed to work in the town, under a penalty of 40s.

The fusion of the two Gilds took place at a later date. They were existing, in an attenuated form, early in the present century.

Tailors.—The oldest known record of this fraternity is dated October 8, 1536. It enjoins that every brother, at setting up his shop, should pay a pot of oil to the fellowship ; as also 3d. a year to the stewards for “ our Lady-light ;” and that each apprentice or person hired by the week should pay 4d. per annum, and each hiring 3d. a year to their play when it should be performed ; also that any person born a subject of the King, and free of Newcastle, might set up a shop on payment of £40, with a pound of wax and a pot of oil, on his admittance ; as also 13d. to our Lady-light, and 8d. to the play which exhibited the Descent into Hell. That no taylor should work on Saturdays after 8 o’clock in the evening, and should keep holy the Sundays, vigils, and festival days, on pain of 6 lbs. of wax for every default. That the Society should pass its accounts on St. John’s Day in every May, and having chosen twelve electors, the said twelve should choose the four stewards, the searchers, and auditors. It further ordered that every brother should be at the procession on Corpus Christi Day, before it passed the New-gate, on pain of forfeiting a pound of wax ; and that each brother should attend in his livery. And that the common light of the fraternity should go before the corpse of every brother when it was carried to church for interment, and continue there lighted during mass time, and till the body was interred ; but if there be a dirge, then the light to be extinguished during the dirge.

There are later Ordinances, which, however, throw no new light upon the Ordinances of this Gild, which was existing in the early part of the present century, having a considerable income from real estate.

It appears that the members of this Gild took prominent part in supporting the rights of the freemen to the open spaces of this town during the last century ; and in 1773, on a victory being obtained by a legal process, this Society presented to each member of the committee who conducted the cause of the burgesses, a gold ring, in the signet of each of which, under a crystal, was represented Liberty stepping out of her temple, with a label proceeding from her mouth, inscribed, “ Town moor saved Aug. 10, 1773.”

Saddlers.—The oldest Ordinance of this Gild is dated March 6,

1459. It enjoins the brethren to go together in procession, in a livery, at the Feast of Corpus Christi, and perform their play at their own cost; and that each brother should be at the procession when his hour was assigned, under pain of 40d. That no Scotsman born should be taken apprentice, or suffered to work within the town, under a penalty of 20s. It further ordered that no apprentice should be taken under the term of seven years, on the pain of 6s. 8d., enjoining civil behaviour to each other at their meetings, the observance of holidays, &c. There were but a small number of members in this fraternity at the beginning of this century.

Bakers and Brewers.—The making of bread and beer being a corporate monopoly (says Mackenzie, "History of Newcastle," ii. 674), this mystery was, in remote times, specially protected by the government of the town. It was agreed at full Gild of the town, held at St. Mary's Hospital, on the Friday before Valentine Day, 1342, and confirmed by the King October 20 in that year, that "the assizes of bread and beer be held according to law. The master bakers, and not their servants, to suffer penalties ordained by Statute. Measures, ells, and weights to be proved twice a year, or at least once." By an inquisition taken at Newcastle January 4, 1446, it appears that the common baking and brewing for sale were restricted to that town, and nowhere else within the port of the Tyne.

This Gild had an Ordinance, under date 1583, to which various references are made in their records. In 1661 it was agreed that the membership meet yearly on November 23, unless it should fall on a Sunday, and then the day after, to elect twelve of the Society and four wardens, who were empowered, by the name of the Wardens of the Art and Mystery of Bakers and Brewers, to prosecute, sue, and implead, and be prosecuted, sued, &c. only within the courts of Newcastle-upon-Tyne; to make laws for the government of the Society, impose fines, &c., forbidding any brother to strike another at any meeting with fist, hand, elbow, dagger, staff, stick, rod, or otherwise, on pain of 20s.; and ordering that no apprentice should be taken under seven years, nor a second until the first had served six

years ; as also that the Society should attend the burials of their brethren, on pain of a penalty of 3s. 4d. for every omission. The Gild was much reduced in numbers towards the end of the last century.

Tanners.—This fraternity was anciently called the *Barkers*. By an Ordinance dated November 8, 1532, the brotherhood was enjoined to come yearly in their best array and apparel, at the feast of Corpus Christi, and go in procession, set forth their pageants, &c. on pain of forfeiting a pound of wax. Not to take any Scot by birth for an apprentice under a penalty of 20s. That each brother should have but one butcher to buy slaughter of, on pain of £10, and not to buy above eight fothers of bark, or forty trees, on pain of 6s. 8d. ; also to supply each other with bark, &c.

This Society had grown comparatively rich, but had very few members at the end of last century.

Cordwainers.—This Gild was incorporated in the 17 Henry VI. (1439). Another Ordinance, dated 17th of Dec., 1566, mentions their meeting house in the then recently dissolved monastery of Blackfriars. It enjoins that every apprentice should serve ten years, five of which to be expired before a second could be taken ; and that foreigners might be admitted into the Company on payment of £5, one half to go to the fellowship and the other to the reparation of Tyne Bridge.

The “Cobblers” seem to have carried on a species of trade warfare with this Gild. There is a record of a grant from the Common Council of the Borough, under date 2nd of June, 1617, reciting that “divers persons for years, under colour of exercising the trade of a cobbler, who should only mend old shoes that are brought to them to be mended, do buy great numbers of old shoes mended and made fit to be worn at London and elsewhere, and cause them to be brought to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and in the Cobblers’ houses, and in the market within the said town, sell them to the best advantage : whereby the fraternity of Cordwainers of Newcastle aforesaid is much impoverished.” The Common Council then proceeds to empower this Gild to fine the aforesaid Cobblers, in view of the preservation of its “ancient customs, rights and privileges.” The Gild, early in the last century, granted to twelve persons the right to follow the

calling of Cobblers, in retail and not in bulk, on payment of 6d. each per annum. This was known as the "Cobblers' Bond."

The Gild followed the old Corporation practice of sharing in each other's purchases of leather; and a special book records these transactions.

Early in the present century this Gild had a considerable fellowship, and was also in possession of considerable property.

Butchers.—An Ordinance of this Gild dated 20th of July, 1621, enjoined the brethren to meet every year on Ash Wednesday, to choose their two Wardens; that apprentices should serve at least eight years, five of which were to expire before a second could be taken; that no brother should be a partner with any foreigners called "crockers," on pain of forfeiting £5; that none should kill after nine o'clock on Saturday night, nor keep open shop after eight o'clock on Sunday morning; that no brother should buy, or seek any licence to kill flesh in Newcastle during Lent, without the general consent of the fellowship, on pain of forfeiting £5; that none should kill either at Lent or at any other time within the liberties of the High Castle, "being in the County of Northumberland," on the like pain for each offence; but that any butcher, though not a brother, might expose good meat for sale in the market from the times of eight in the morning till four in the afternoon.

There was an Order in the Gild that no free brother should blow a calf's pluck, or any part of a calf, except calf's close-ear, nor any other goods but a cow's udder, under a penalty of 6s. 8d. unforgiven.

The Gild was flourishing in the first quarter of this century.

Smiths.—The oldest known Ordinance of this Gild, dated 14th of January, 1436, enjoins that the brethren should go together in procession on the Feast of Corpus Christi, and play their play at their own expense, attending at the hour appointed, on pain of forfeiting a pound of wax; that every brother should be at St. Nicholas' Church, at the setting forth of the procession on St. Loy Day, on the like penalty; that no Scotsman born "should be taken apprentice or suffered to work, on pain of the forfeiture of 40s., half whereof to go to the Chamber of the town, and the other half to the fellowship;" that no brother should sell "seyme and coff" by

weight, under 3s. 4d. a hundred, on pain of forfeiting 6s. 8d. for each offence.

Another Ordinance, dated September 25, 1664, exhibits the Society as consisting of the different branches of blacksmiths and farriers, blacksmiths or anchor-smiths, and locksmiths or white-smiths.

Another, dated August 17, 1677, empowered the fraternity to be a body politic in law; enjoined them to meet yearly, on St. Loy Day, to choose four wardens, of whom one, at least, was to be an anchor-smith; that the twelve of the Company should consist of four anchor-smiths, four blacksmiths and farriers, and four locksmiths, to choose four searchers; that apprentices should serve seven years; and that no brother should come to meetings, or attend the public Gild of the town with his apron on, but with a decent cloak or coat, on pain of forfeiting 6d. for each default.

The Gild was still flourishing in the earlier part of this century.

Fullers and Dyers.—The members of this fraternity were originally designated "Walkers." An Ordinance dated May 6, 1477, enacted that no brother should stain cloth upon the tentor to deliver it with the short wand, on pain of forfeiting 4 lbs. of wax; nor tentor cloth on a Sunday, nor "wend to the walk mylne" with any raw cloth on that day, on pain of forfeiting 2 lbs. of wax; that they should take no Scotchman born to apprentice, nor set any such to work, under a penalty of 20s., half whereof to go to the Society, and half to the support of Tyne Bridge; that no apprentice should be taken under seven years; that no brother should work carsey under 2d. the yard; to work no broad-cloth of colour under 4d. a yard, nor any wadded blue under 2d. the yard; to "dight" (*i.e.*, clean) no gown under 4d. on pain of half a pound of wax; not to sheer a dozen yards of tilled cloth under 3d., on pain of 2 lbs. of wax, or fustian under 1d. a yard, or broad-cloth under 3d. for the like quantity, on penalty of forfeiting 1 lb. of wax for each.

The Ordinance also provided that they should attend the weddings and burials of the brethren in their livery; that they should meet in their livery in Carlel Croft, on St. John's Day in

May at six o'clock in the morning, and upon St. John's Day at Christmas at one o'clock in the afternoon; that none of the Company should fail at being at the setting forth of the procession on Corpus Christi Day, on pain of forfeiting 1 lb. of wax; that each brother should pay 6d. to the processions and play yearly; that they were to choose twelve, who were to be sworn and elected wardens, auditors, and searchers, two to attend the Mayor and Chamber for the year, &c., &c. The Gild was still existing in a small way in the early part of this century.

All the foregoing were Craft Gilds, and their Ordinances show how much the element of Trade protection was aimed at. There were, in addition to these, fifteen bye-trades, or lesser fraternities, which I shall notice in another chapter.



CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE GILDS OF NORTHUMBERLAND (*continued*).

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.—I have now to notice the Gilds of the Lesser Fraternities of this ancient town. There is one of them of very great interest, and this I shall proceed to mention first.

Gild of the Fraternity of the Blessed Trinity of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—In 1492 this body purchased the site of their present house, for which a red rose was to be paid yearly, if demanded, at Midsummer for ever. About 1530 the fraternity had conferred upon it the duty of primage and pilotage. Henry VIII., on October 5, 1536, granted a new charter of incorporation to this Gild, which then consisted of men and women, to have a common seal, implead and be impleaded, with licence to build and embattle two towers—the one at the entrance to the haven of Tyne, and the other on the hill adjoining, in each of which a light was to be obtained every night; for support whereof they were empowered to receive 4d. for every foreign ship, and 2d. for every English vessel entering the

port of Tyne. This charter was confirmed by Edward VI. in 1548, and by Mary in 1553.

In 1584, Queen Elizabeth, by charter, refounded this society under the designation of the *Master Pilots and Seamen of the Trinity House of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*. Another charter was granted by James I., in 1606, constituting this society, under the above name, a body politic, and appointing a Master, twelve elder brethren, two elder Wardens, with two assistants, and two younger Wardens, also with two assistants. They were to have a common seal, and their jurisdiction was extended to Blyth, Sunderland, Hartlepool, Whitby, and Staithes. Power was given to impose fines on offending brethren, and to appoint pilots for the river Tyne, with its creeks and members. The pilotage dues to be 12d. for every foot a laden vessel should draw, and 8d. for unladen vessels. The duty of primage was confirmed, after the rate (for vessels coming from beyond the seas into the river) of 2d. per ton of wine, oil, and other things sold by the ton—fish killed and brought in by Englishmen excepted; and 3d. per last of flax, hemp, pitch, tar, or other things sold by the last. Lightage was also confirmed to them; of every English born owner's ship 4d. each time, and of every ship owned by an alien 12d. The buoing, canning, marking, and beaconing of the river Tyne was also confirmed to them, for which they were to receive of each ship whose owner was English, and burden above 20 chaldron of coals, 4d.; of the same, when under 20 chaldron, 2d.; and of every alien, 6d. They were also empowered to hold lands and tenements under £30 per annum clear value.

In 1687 James II. granted a new charter to this fraternity, with an addition of Pilotage. After this period the body became active in the maritime affairs of the nation. In 1800 the Master and brethren, assisted by a committee of shipowners, applied to Parliament for extended powers. They represented that the pilotage fixed by the Charter of James II. had become an insufficient compensation for the labour, peril, and industry of the pilots. It was also proposed that toll be levied upon vessels sailing northwards for the maintenance of beacons and buoys at Holy Island. In the Session of 1801 there

was enacted (41 George III. c. lxxxvi.) "An Act for extending and enlarging the powers and increasing the rates and duties of the Corporation of the Trinity House of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and for better regulating the Port of Newcastle," conferring many of the powers sought. The income of the Corporation Gilds, which in 1796 had been £1,406 7s. 1½d., had by 1817 increased to £3,866 17s. 6d.

About the year 1820 the fraternity was supporting within their house twelve men and thirteen widow pensioners, each having an allowance of 28s. per month, with a coat and hat to the men, and a gown and petticoat to the women, once in two years. They were provided with coals and medical attendance, with an allowance of wine when sick. There were two classes of out-pensioners. Of the first or master's class there were sixty, each of whom received £7 per annum, and 20s. extra for each child under fourteen years of age. The second class is limited to forty pensioners, of whom there were twenty-three upon the list, each receiving £5 per annum, and 20s. extra for each child under fourteen. The total number of bretheren in this Society was then 340.

Coopers.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, dated Jan. 20, 1426, enjoined them to go together yearly at the feast of Corpus Christi in procession, as other crafts did, and play their play at their own charge; that none should take a Scotsman born to apprentice, nor set any such to work, under a penalty of 40s. No brother to take more than one apprentice in seven years. All turners and pulley-makers coming to Newcastle to be bound by the same Ordinance. An after clause forbade the employing of any Dutchman. An Ordinance of the 17th Elizabeth consolidated the Fraternities of Coopers, Pulley-makers, Turners, and Ropemakers; and it was ordained "that none of these Companies shall take any apprentice but one in four years, except the children of the bretheren," penalty £10; or for any apprentice taken during the servitude of another, £5. In 1699 the Mayor of Newcastle granted to this fraternity the power to search all herrings, &c.

Barber-Chirurgeons, with Chandlers.—The ancient Ordinance of this conjoint fraternity, dated October 10, 1442, enjoined that they should go together in procession on Corpus Christi Day, in livery,

and afterwards play the "Baptizing of Christ," at their own expense. That no alien born should be taken apprentice, or allowed to work within the town or without, under a penalty of 20s.; that the society should uphold the light of St. John the Baptist, in Nicholas Church, as long as they were of ability; that no barber, apprentice, nor servant should shave on a Sunday, neither within the town, nor without by a mile's space. Another Ordinance, dated 1671, confirmed the former, and enacted that when any brother had taken a cure in hand, no other should meddle with it till it was completed, on pain of certain forfeits, one-half of which to go to the brother first called in. In 1648 the fraternity petitioned the Corporation for a site whereon to build a meeting-house, with land for a garden to be planted with medicinal herbs; and the grant was made on conditions. On June 14, 1742, ordered "that no brother shave John Robson, till he pays what he owes to Robert Shafto." Early in the present century the fraternity consisted of forty-five members.

Slaters.—The Ordinance was dated March 12, 1451, enjoined them to go together in a livery yearly at the feast of Corpus Christi to play their play, at their own expense. No apprentice should serve less than seven years, or a second be taken until the first had served six years; no brother should take a Scot apprentice under fine of 40s. If any brother took a slate quarry, or any place to cover with slates, none should undermine him. No brother to work upon St. Catherine's Day. Order dated 1460 that no brother should take less than 6s. 8d. for handling a rood of slate covering.

An Ordinance dated September 28, 1579, united the Slaters and Bricklayers. They were to play annually at Corpus Christi, "The Offering of Isaac by Abraham."

An Ordinance dated March 16, 1677, separated them from the Wallers, Bricklayers, and Dawbers *alias* Plasterers, and made them a Company by the name of Slaters and Tylers; ordered them to meet yearly on St. Catherine's Day; to work no kind of black mortar or clay, but to make ovens and chimneys, or funnels.

Early in the present century the fraternity consisted of thirty-five members.

Weavers.—The earliest known Ordinance of this fraternity is

dated August, 1527. By the authority of the Mayor, Sheriff, and Aldermen, Justices of the Peace, with the consent of their own body, it enjoined them to assemble yearly at the feast of Corpus Christi, go together in procession, and play their play and pageant of "The Bearing of the Cross," at their own expense. To take no Scotsman born to apprentice, nor to set any to work under a penalty of 40s., wherein half to go to the fellowship, and half to the work of Tyne Bridge, "without any forgiveness." To admit any person who had served an apprenticeship with a brother of the society, a member thereof, on the payment of 13s. 4d. and 12d. for a pot of ale; as also any man of that craft, being the King's liege man, with power to set up a shop, on payment of £20, and 12d. for a pot of ale. The searchers to search four times a year at least. That any brother falling into poverty should be supplied out of the common box, at the discretion of the Steward and the twelve; and that any brother misbehaving at meetings should forfeit six pounds of wax for every default. That any brother lying in wait to beat, slay, or murder any of his bretheren, should be put out of the society for ever; that any brother calling another "Scot," "Mansworn" in malice, should forfeit 6s. 8d., without any forgiveness; that every apprentice should serve seven years, and pay at his entrance a pound of wax. The accounts to be settled, and officers elected, every year. The prices for certain kinds of work fixed. An Ordinance dated August 12, 1608, provided that foreigners and persons not free should take no work to the prejudice of the fraternity. A warrant was yearly granted to seize bad yarn, and to receive tolls from pedlars who kept booths on the Sandhill. The fraternity was very small in 1725.

Plumbers, Pewterers, and Glaziers.—The Ordinance of this fraternity (which anciently consisted of the Goldsmiths, Plumbers, Glaziers, Pewterers, and Painters), dated September 1, 1536, enjoined them to go together on the feast of Corpus Christi, and maintain their flag, "The Three Kings of Coleyn [Cologne];" to have four Wardens, one goldsmith, one plumber, one glazier, and one pewterer or painter, to be sworn on admission not to interfere with each other's occupation; that no Scotsman born should be taken apprentice, or suffered to work in Newcastle, on pain of forfeiting

3s. 4d., one half of which to go to the upholding of Tyne Bridge, the other half to the fraternity.

Amongst the orders occur the following : 1598, That none of the Fellowship be permitted to "worke or sell his own glasse under seven-pence one foot ;" 1615, "No brother to work any Normandye glasse under eight-pence the foot. September 7, 1830, "No brother to lend his diamond, except to a free brother of the Company, on pain of forfeiting 6s. 8d."

1546. *Felt-makers, Curriers, and Armourers.*—The Ordinance, dated October 1, 1546, enjoined them to go together in procession at the feast of Corpus Christi, bear the charges of the lights, pageants, and play. None born out of the King's dominions should work with them, unless he were denizen, or for urgent causes, to be admitted by the Mayor and Justices of the Peace, on pain of paying £40 sterling. They were not to work on holidays, or on Saturdays later than five o'clock. The three associated trades were not to work at each other's occupations. March 27, 1671, order for seizure of French hats, except such as were sold by members of the Company. 1719, ordered that no Quaker should be taken apprentice, on pain of forfeiting £100. Early in the present century there were fifteen members.

Milners or Millers.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, dated September 20, 1578, cites another of older date, constituting twenty free millers into a fellowship, with perpetual succession, and enjoining them to choose two Wardens every year, who might sue and be sued &c., in the Courts of the town ; and, that when the general plays should be performed, they should play the one anciently assigned to this fellowship, called "The Deliverance of the Children of Isrell out of the Thraldome, Bondage, and Servitude of King Pharo," on pain of forfeiting 20s. for absence ; that no stranger or alien-born should be taken apprentice or set to work under pain of 6s. 8d., and that apprentices should serve seven years ; that no corn should be ground on Sundays ; that each miller in the counties of Northumberland and Durham, who brought corn from Newcastle market, should pay the fraternity an acknowledgment of 6d. per annum ; and pay 2s. 6d. every time he should be found in the wheat or malt

market before two o'clock in the afternoon on market day, unless to fetch away the corn which his customers had bought there; and that none such foreign millers should buy corn there, under a penalty of 2s. 6d. for each default. The Wardens were to make oath in the Town Chamber concerning the fines, half whereof to go to the support of the Newcastle part of Tyne Bridge.

On April 8, 1672, an order was made that if any brother attended the funeral of another with a black hat he should be fined 6d. for every such default. The gild had but fourteen members in 1820.

House Carpenters, anciently called Wrights.—An ordinance of this society dated July 3, 1579, constituted the House Carpenters and Joiners a body corporate of themselves, with perpetual succession, and power to sue and be sued in the Courts of Newcastle. It was ordered that the fraternity should meet yearly and choose three wardens, two of whom were to be house carpenters and the third a joiner. That whenever the general plays of the time called Corpus Christi plays should be played, they should play the "Burial of Christ," which anciently belonged to their fellowship; that no apprentice should serve less than seven years; no Scotsman to be taken as such under a penalty of 40s., nor to be made free on any account. It was also defined which branches of work the carpenters and joiners should respectively follow. In 1589 the Joiners were separated from the House Carpenters and made into a Gild by themselves, with ordinances, &c.

Masons.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, under date September 1, 1581, constituted it a corporate body, with perpetual succession; enjoined them to meet yearly to choose two Wardens, who might sue and be sued in the Courts of Newcastle, make bye-laws, &c. Whenever the Corpus Christi plays were performed, they were to play "The Burial of our Lady St. Mary the Virgin." Every absent brother to forfeit 2s. 6d. No Scotsman to be taken apprentice under a penalty of 40s., nor ever be admitted into the Company on any account whatever. That at the marriages and burials of bretheren and their wives, the craft should attend to the church such persons to be married or buried; that one half of their fines should go to the

maintenance of the great bridge, the other half to the fellowship. The fraternity had but fifteen members early in the present century.

Shipwrights.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, dated August 8, 1636, probably in continuation of an earlier one, enjoins the members to meet yearly on December 27, to choose two Wardens, and the like number of overseers; prohibiting them from working on Sundays and holidays observed by the Church, giving them powers to make bye-laws, and restricting apprentices from working tide-work till they had served three years. A later Ordinance, dated 1674, was of the same character. In 1825 the fraternity consisted of twenty-two members only.

Colliers, Paviers, and Carriage-men.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, composed of several crafts, was dated 30th July, 1656, and appears to have been a mutual agreement between themselves, pending proper authorisation from the magistrates of the borough. It ordered that no stranger, not having served an apprenticeship to their calling, should be set to work, penalty 40s., and that any brother working a day's work privately should forfeit 6s. 8d. for each default; that they should choose a Warden yearly on the feast of St. Mark, who should keep the books of the Company. They had a box-master and two key-keepers. About 1825 there were ten members.

These were known locally as the "Fifteen Bye-Trades" of Newcastle—by fusion the number had become reduced;—and I draw the preceding details largely from Mackenzie's "History of the Borough." There are yet some other Companies to be mentioned.



CHAPTER XXXIX.

GILDS OF NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE (*continued*).

THE following fraternities were not considered to be included in the Fifteen Bye-Trades of the Borough, already described, although some of them appear to have sought admission thereto by various devices at different periods.

Hoastmen.—This was one of the earliest fraternities in Newcastle,

and has existed from time immemorial. By a clause in the great charter granted by Queen Elizabeth to the town, they were incorporated as a free and distinct fraternity. Forty-eight persons were named therein for the better loading and disposing of pit coals and stones upon the Tyne, and for their own better support as a society, with the title of Governor, Stewards, and Brethren of the Fraternity of Hoastmen in the Town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a common seal being awarded. The Governor and Stewards were to be annually elected on the 4th January.

Power was given to the Hoastmen to load and unload anywhere on the Tyne between Newcastle and Sparhawk, yet as near to Newcastle as they could. In return for these privileges the Hoastmen granted to Her Majesty and her heirs for ever 1s. for every chaldron of coals shipped in the port of Tyne for home consumption.

During the reign of Charles I. great abuses and extortions crept into the coal trade, chiefly under Royal authority. Other local and serious complaints followed. In 1674 the Hoastmen endeavoured to obtain an Act of Parliament to regulate their affairs and avoid the abuses complained of. In 1682 they made the admission into their fraternity more exclusive than formerly. In 1690 they made an order that the custom of gift coals to the City of London should be abrogated. In 1697 the mayor of the borough granted a warrant to seize on coals, grindstones, and rub-stones sold by foreigners, *i.e.*, persons not free of the town and Hoastmen's Company. In 1706 a fruitless attempt was made to rid the Hoastmen of Newcastle of the duty of 12d. per chaldron which had been granted by that society to Queen Elizabeth and her successors, Queens of England, for ever. In 1824 the fraternity, which was still regarded as one of the highest respectability, consisted of 29 members. It was computed that 839 persons had in the whole been admitted to the freedom of the company.*

Bricklayers and Plasterers.—The earliest record preserved by this Craft Gild is one dated “the viith day of Nouember, in the yere of

* The origin of this fraternity clearly dates back to a period when strangers visiting the Port were placed under the charge of Hoastmen (*i.e.*, persons to look after the “Hoasts”), who took charge of them during their stay.

ouyr Lord God A thousand four hundreth and four and ffyfty," enjoining them to meet yearly at the feast of Corpus Christi, to go together in procession as other crafts did, and play at their own charge two plays, viz., "The Creation of Adam" and "The Flying of our Lady into Egype." After the plays the Wardens were to be chosen by the common assent of the fellowship; each man of the said craft to be at the procession when his hour was assigned him; that they should not take any to apprentice, nor set any to work either within the town or without, but such as be the King's liegemen, on pain of 20d., one half thereof to go to the fellowship, and the other half to Tyne Bridge; that no Englishman, not being a freeman, should work in the town, on pain of a pound of wax; that if any free brother, or his wife, should die, all the lights of the fellowship should be borne before them, according to the custom of the said fellowship.

It was ordered, October 2, 1637, "by the consent of the Company of Waulers and Bricklayers, that every brother of the said fellowship shall pay sixpence each weeke, towards the maintaineing of a suite against forreners."

It was ordered March 17, 1645, "and agreed uppon with the consent of the most pte. of the Company of Wallers and Bricklayers, that Thomas Grey shall be a ffree brother amongst us, and ffree of the said Company. In consideration whereof we have received of him xxs., and he ingaiges himself to pay fforty shillings more; twenty shillings thereof on Martinmas Day next, and the other twentie shillings the 17 March, 1646: besides he is to make a breekfast for the said Company, and give every man a pare of gloves, according to the custome of the said Company."

On February 24, 1659, Thomas Coates and John Wann were appointed *Searchers*, whose duty consisted in examining buildings and reporting to the Company that such were sufficient. St. Luke's Day, 1659, Robert Robson and Richard Garbut fined each 3s. 4d. "for working insufficient worke." Many other instances of a similar kind are also recorded.

Another Ordinance of the fraternity, dated January 19, 1660, constituted them a fellowship with perpetual succession, who should meet on the 24th February in every year, and choose two Stewards,

who might make Orders, plead, and be impleaded, &c., in the Courts of Newcastle; that they should not be molested by the Company of Masons, or the Slaters; that no foreigner should work in the town, under a penalty of 6s. 8d.; that none should employ an alien born, under the like penalty; that apprentices should serve seven years, and that no second should be taken until the first had served three.

Porters.—The first known Ordinance of this fraternity is dated in 1528. On September 25, 1648, the Common Council of Newcastle made an order to revoke the Ordinance of the craft for refusing to go down and lend their assistance, on the revolt of Tynemouth Castle.

On September 27, 1667, a second Ordinance was granted, which constituted the fraternity a body politic, sixteen in number (vacancies in which by death and removal were to be filled up by the Mayor of Newcastle), and ordered them to meet on Michaelmas Day, and choose two stewards, with power to make bye-laws, sue, &c., in the Courts of Newcastle, accompanied with a table of wages. On January 1, 1670, another Ordinance was granted to this body; and on December 14, 1704, a new table of wages was appointed them by the Common Council.

There is reason to suppose that the Free Porters' office was a position of some consequence originally, both as to responsibility and profit; and that they were anciently properly the body guards of the magistrates, or perhaps of the town. As late as George I. they were armed with a sword and a dagger, in addition to the halbert, which is the only weapon they now carry when they attend the magistrates, &c., on the day the Mayor is elected, and the Sheriff at the execution of criminals. (*Vide* note quoted by Mackenzie, ii. 703.)

On January 21, 1691, an Order was made by the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, that the Slaters and Tylers should not exercise the trade of bricklaying and plastering, otherwise than in making and mending chimney-tops above the slates and plastering them; but that the annual acknowledgment from them to this society should cease to be paid in future.

The end of this confraternity, assuming it was the end, was a remarkable one, as narrated by Mackenzie (ii. 700): "The Society consists of 111 members. On enrolling the indenture of an apprentice, £20, £10, and latterly £6, was paid; but some of the members refusing to comply with this charge—2s. 6d. being all that could be demanded by law—the Company, in a hasty fit of resentment, resolved to sell its property, to prevent those apprentices who paid only the legal sum for enrolment from enjoying any benefit therefrom. Accordingly, in 1826 their property in the Bird and Bush Yard and Silver Street was sold for £1,090."

Meters.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, dated August 3, 1611, enjoined them to meet on the 20th of September in every year, and choose four Wardens, who were to pay accounts and make an equal division of their money on the day following. There was a card, or table of rates and duties of the same date. On October 18, 1670, upon the alteration of measures, another Ordinance was granted to the craft; and on June 30, 1726, a new card, or table of rates and duties, was appointed by act of Common Council.

The Free Meters claimed and exercised the exclusive privilege of *measuring* of grain imported and exported, for which they made rather extravagant charges, particularly to non-freemen and foreigners. Their charges were 5d. a last for freemen, 10d. for non-freemen, and 1s. 10½d. for aliens.

These charges were resisted, and the matter was brought to a legal issue at the assizes in 1827, when material modifications were agreed to by mutual consent.

Rope Makers.—An Ordinance of this fraternity, dated April 14, 1648, citing one of more ancient date, made them a fellowship with perpetual succession, to meet on June 6 every year and choose two Wardens, who, with the fellowship, should make bye-laws, sue and be sued, &c., in the Courts of Newcastle. Ordered that they should not be molested by the Company of Coopers, Pulley-makers, and Turners; that no brother should set an alien to work; that they should take apprentices only once in four years, but put their own children to the business at their pleasure; and further enjoined that they should not impose upon the public by excessive prices.

There is an order in the books, under date January 30, 1695, that every brother should pay a fine of 6s. 8d. for every hundred-weight of hemp, unsound "for rope yards for either shipp, keel, water-gins, cole pitts, or lead-mines."

Early in the present century the Company consisted of about forty members, and its average annual income was about £115.

Sail Makers.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, dated December 18, 1663, constituted five persons of the occupation and fellowship, with perpetual succession, and enjoined them to meet yearly on August 10, and appoint two Wardens, who, with the fellowship, might sue and be sued in the Courts of Newcastle, and have power to make bye-laws; that apprentices should serve seven years; that every brother should attend at meetings; and that none but those who were free of the town, and this fellowship, should exercise their trade. The Ordinance was confirmed by the judges, August 15, 1664. About 1825, the Gild consisted of fourteen members.

Goldsmiths.—I have shown in a previous chapter that this ancient Company was incorporated with the Plumbers, Glaziers, Pewterers, and Painters in 1536, and separated from them in 1717.

Scriveners.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, dated September 13, 1675, appointed eight scriveners a fellowship, with perpetual succession. The business of a scrivener then consisted principally in making leases, writings, and assignments, and procuring money on security. The Gild was nearly extinct at the commencement of the present century.

Cooks.—The Ordinance of this craft, dated September 10, 1575, cited a still more ancient one. They received dues of all persons that cut or sold fish, or dealt in pies or pasties; and were bound to keep up the bonfires on the Sandhill on Midsummer or St. Peter's Eve. The Company probably became extinct about the close of the seventeenth century.

Girdlers and Keelmen.—This craft is mentioned in a Star Chamber decree, under date May 2, 1516. It is now extinct. There is a body of Keelmen on the Tyne, having Parliamentary powers.

Waits or Musicians.—A very ancient fellowship, now extinct. Originally they were musical watchmen, who paraded the streets

during winter to prevent theft or robbery. They were also the privileged minstrels at weddings and feasts. The Corporation provided them with instruments, and in the reign of Queen Elizabeth paid "five waites sallary £20."

There were other crafts, such as *Spicers, Furbishers, Bronzers, Fletchers, Spuriers, Vintners*, and all now extinct.

Upholsterers, Tinplate Workers, and Stationers.—The Ordinance of this fraternity, under July 22, 1675, constituted six Upholsterers, three Tinplate Workers, and two Stationers, a fellowship, with perpetual succession; and ordered them to meet annually on the 25th day of July, and choose four Stewards, two Upholsterers, and one of each of the other branches, who, with the Society, shall have power to make byelaws, impose fines, &c.; that apprentices should serve seven years, and no second taken until the first had served three; that they should not interfere with each other's callings; and that no person not free of the town and this Society should exercise their trade in Newcastle.

The craft early in the present century consisted of fifteen members.



CHAPTER XL.

GILDS OF OXFORDSHIRE.

I DO not find that the Gilds of the various towns in this county, other than those of Oxford itself, call for special comment.

Oxford City.—This ancient seat of learning boasted at quite an early period of a Gild Merchant, which, in process of time, assumed the civil government of the City, and controlled with an arbitrary will the other leading Companies, or Craft Gilds, therein. This assumption of control probably was not generally recognised until after 1388; for the returns made to the writ of that year embraced three Gilds, none of them presenting features of special interest. The point I think most worthy of elucidation now is the manifestation of control, as shown in the records of the City.

It is interesting to note that the founders of the University itself

constituted themselves into a Gild, of whom the head was the "Rector Scholarum." This was at least not later than Henry I., or early in the twelfth century. "They created a Brotherhood for the good of their profession and the advantage of the public." (*Annals of Oxfordshire* (Jeaffreson), i. 65.)

In an Ordinance of the City, under date October 23, 1534, there was contained the following :—

... "Also it ys enacted and agreed by the same Mair, Aldermen, Bazlyffs, and Comynalte of the seid Toune, that no person ne persons shall use eny maner of marchaunt dyse, or marchaunt dysyng, nor use and exercise eny vytelyng, bying or sellyng, or eny handy craft or ocupacon wythyn the seid Town or subbarbs of the same, except he or they be free of the guyld of the seid Mair and Comminaltie wythyn the seyd toun and subbarbs of the same, under the payn of every person and persons offendyng contrary to this present ordinaunce after monycyon gevyng unto hym or them by the Mair and Chamberlyns of the seid Toun for the tyme beyng, xls., for every tyme so doying or offendyng, the oon half to our sovereyng lord the kyng, and thother half to the Mair and Commonalte of the same town. . . ."

At Burford there was a Merchant Gild formed on the model of Oxford City.

Bakers.—There was a Craft or mystery of Bakers in this City at an early date, of which I cannot find any precise details ; but on September 30, 1538, the following order was made by the Council of the City :—

At a Counsell holden the xx day of September, in the xxxth yere of the reigne of King Henry the viijth, it is condysented, establyshed, and enacted for ever by the hole assent of the Mayre, Alderman, Bayllyffs, Burgeses, and Comminaltye of the Towne of Oxford, that from this day forward ther shall noe Alderman thought to be elected and chossyn to the office of a Alderman, or that he be admytted to the rome of a Alderman, shall not be sworne to the same office, nor were his cloke vntyll suche tyme as he be bounden to the Mayre, Bayllyffs, Bourgeses, and Comminaltye of the same towne, and to ther successors in a obligacion of c^{li} wt

ij sufficient surties wth hym to be p^d to thusse of the same Towne under the condicion folowing, that ys to saye, that he shall not usse ij occupacions of vytlelyng crafts, that ys to say a baker and a brewer, a bocher and a brewer, a brewer a inholder, a brewer and a fyshemonger, nither baker and fyshemonger, nor noe other dobyll vytlelyng craftes, but to leve one of the same vytlelyng crafts, uppon payne of forfayture of the sayd c^{li} to thusse aforesayd. And further it is enacted from this day forward that ther shall never noe baker hereafter be chossen to the office of the mayraltye of this Toune excepte he leve the occupation, crafte, or mystery of bakers for the tyme that he shalbe Mayre. And he to be bounde in a obligacion of c^{li} w^t ij sufficient surtyes w^t hym to the Bayliffes, Burges, and Comminaltye of the Toune of Oxford, and to ther successors."

It will not probably require much reading between the lines to discover that this harsh treatment of the victuallers in general, and of the Bakers in particular, really arose out of the claims of the University (as against the City) to have exclusive control of the Victualling trades, under its title to the Assize of Bread and Ale. To this same cause may be attributed the following Order:—

"At a Counsaill holden the viij day of January 1559, it was agreed by the Mayre, Aldermen, and Counsaill of the Citie that as well the Bakers as the towne dwellers shall grynde all there breade corne at the Castell mylls, according to an old custome, uppon forfeiture of there corne that shall grynde else where, to be taken by the Bayles for the tyme beyng, thone moytie of every forfeiture to be to the use and profytt of the body of the Towne, and thother moytie to the said Bayles."

In 1570-1 it was agreed at the City Council that the White-bakers should be incorporated.

On Sept. 2, 1580, the following entry was made in the City record:—

"Hit ys also agreed at this Counsell that the bakers of this Cytie shall and may use their Learned Counsell, towching some orders to be made emongest them, for calling their companye together, and for expellinge suche fforreners as bringe breade and put hit to sale at this markett being not free nor inhabytaunts of this Cytie, so

that suche orders as they shall devise be first sene and allowed by this howsse."

Butchers' Company.—The Charter of this Company recorded in Archives of the City, under date 1536. It recites their petition to the Judges of Assize to oversee and examine their orders made by the Master Wardens of the said Craft of bochers, and approved by the Mayor and two Aldermen of the City; and also the approbation of the said Judges.

Then follow the orders, among which it is first "ordeyned that the election day of their officers must be allways uppon Monday next after the feast of S^t Luke y^e Evangelist." Another of their orders is that "no bocher shall serve or sell any flesh to any manciple, coke, or any other newe comer to him to be retayled, tyll he have very knowledge y^t y^e sayde manciple, or coke, or any other person standeth clerely out of danger for fleshe wth y^e person of whom the said manciple, coke, or other person, is so indebted before, or else y^t it be openly and evidently understood that a full agreement and accorde is made for the contentation of all such debt or debts for fleshe wth y^e person of whom y^e sayd manciple, coke, or other person or persons is so indebted before, except that they pay ready money for such flesh as they shall buy, upon payne of . . . at every time, to be employed to the use aforesayde." Another order is that "y^e M^r and Wardens of the bochers shall have the serch of all fleshe that shalbe slayne or killed wthin y^e Towne and suburbs of Oxford, or franchises thereof, to be sold in grosse or by retayle, and if they finde any flesh not wholesome, then to seaze uppon it as forefayted, and the party offending to be punished by y^e Mayor and y^e Justices for the time beinge. And y^t any bocher bringinge fleshe to the Towne to be sold, shall also brynge the hyde or skin and tallow of the same flesh to be sold there, under payne of forfeiture."

This may be the commencement of the corporate powers of the Craft. As early as 1532-3 "at a Counsell holden the xxj day January, in the xxiiij yere of King Henry viij, it is agreed by the more part of the Council [of the City] the bochers of the Towne of Oxford shall every Sondag in the yere sell flesshe in theyr shoppys."

In 1535 it had been "condyssented and agreed by the more part

of the Counsell, that the bochers of the Towne and suburbys of the same shall sell ther talloe to the chandlers of the Towne, and to noe other persons, dwelling out of the Towne, under the payne to forfayte at every tym that doe the contrarye to the usse of the Chamber of the Town xxs., and the talloe that ys soe takyn to be to the usse of the Chamber." In the same year the butchers had been voted the use of a piece of "voyde grounde wythowte South Bridge," to make "sklautter housse apon paying yerly therfore a compotent rent." They were to kill no more in their old slaughter-houses after a day named.

On the 28th of August, 1556, it was ordered that all the butchers of the City, being freemen, should occupy and keep their standings in the new shambles by seniority, and they were to be "dyscharygd of the fiftene for there bochers shoppes, and of there wekely pence."

Brewers' Company.—The Ordinances of this Company were enrolled upon the City records under date February 4, 1570-1. These consisted of a supplication of the Brewers to the City for their establishment, tendered February 4, 13 Queen Elizabeth, and of 17 Articles, a few of which will be now noticed:—

"Art. 1. The master and wardens of this craft or mistery of brewers, is to be chosen the Sunday next after the Nativitie of St. Mary the Virgin, accordinge to the grants of the progenitors of our Soveraigne Lady the Queen that now is, &c.

"Art. 5. No man must entice away one anothers customers, under the payne of xs.

"Art. 6. No brewer to serve any typler or hucster with bere or ale unless he is suer that y^e sayde typler or hucster standeth clerely out of danger for ale or bere with y^e person he is indetted to, ar at the least hath compounded for it ; nor unless the said typler have entered into recognisance for kepinge good rule in his house, &c., under payne of forfeiture of xxs. for every such offence.

"Art. 7. No customer, typler, or hucster may lend, sell, breke, or cutt any brewers vessell, or put therein any oth'er ale or beare then of y^e owners of the same vessell, under the payne of 3s. 4d. to the fellowship of brewers.

“ Art. 8. None but freemen may brewe ale or bere, under peyne of forfeiture of the drink to the Baylives and 40s. to the Company.

“ Art. 15. Journeymen out of service, or ale bearers, must by 6 of the cloke in the morning present himselfe at St. Peter's church dore in the Bayley, there to be hired,” &c.

Here there is reference to the fraternity as having exercised earlier privileges from the Crown ; and I find a reference dating back to 1513 (4 Henry VIII.) to the effect that any brewer discontinuing the exercise of his craft in the city “by the space of a hole yere,” or in “time of derth of malte doe refuse and will not brew, and afterward in time of good cheap malt will take uppon him to bryw againe,” such person should pay such fine as the occupation of bruers ” should determine, or pay 40s. for such subsequent brewing.

The solution of this apparent complication will probably be found in the fact that the Craft of Brewers was originally under the regulation of the University, as distinguished from the City. Here is a decree directly in point :—

“ *Concerning Bruers.*—Memorand. yt y^e xijth day of July in y^e yeare of our Lord God 1525, y^e 8 (*sic*) yere of y^e reigne of Kinge Henry y^e 8, it was inacted and established for evermore by the consent and assent of my Lorde Chancellor of y^e University of Oxon, the Commissary, Doctors, and other the hedds and governors of y^e sayd Universitie, at y^e instant labour, sute, petition of all the brewers of Oxford for that time beinge, yt where the sayd brewers, not only by y^e reason of the high price of malt and other thinges, but also by y^e reason of the great number of brewers being occupied and continuing the sayd craft be now decayed and in a manner undone, that fro henceforth these brewers that now be occupieinge and usinge the sayd craft continually shall use and occupy the same crafte during their lives, or as long as they shall be contented to continue in the same craft, provided allway that when and as often as it shall happen any of the sayde brewers that now occupyinge and usinge the sayd occupation to depart out of this world, or doe refuse and leave of ye same crafte of bruinge, that then no brewer to occupy y^e sayde occupation wthin y^e Town of Oxford or suburbe of the same be admitted, neither by y^e sayde Chancellor, Commissary, Doctors, and other hedds or

governours of the same University, ne by y^e sayde brewers for y^e time beinge, unto y^e time that y^e sayde bruers come to the number of 16 brewers only, and then the same number of 16 so to continue for ever, and no more to be taken in. And if it shall happen any person or persons hereafter to be taken uppon them to brewe w^{thin} y^e sayde 'Towne or suburbes over and above y^e said numbre of 16 brewers, neither be not admittid on of y^e same 16, that then y^e same person or persons so brewinge and usinge y^e same craft contrary to the form of this act and statute to forfeit for every time so doeinge, uppon a sufficient proffe there uppon made, x^{li}, to be applied in manner and form followinge, that is to say, to y^e Commissary of y^e sayde University for y^e time being 40s. ; to y^e common chest of y^e sayde University for y^e time being 40s. ; and to the Master, Wardens, and Fellowship of the sayde occupation for the time, other 40s. : provided alway that if any brewer depart out of this worlde, and his wife over live him, then she to brue, if she will, as long as she is sole and widowe, and no longer ; and if any brewer have a son liable to occupy the sayd occupation, and will occupy the same, that then he to be preferred before any other forreyner comminge into the same occupation."

In the preceding decree the Master, Wardens, and Fellowship of the Company of Brewers is fully recognised ; and hence the earlier independent existence of the Gild seems to be established.

As early as 1534 the City had proposed to grant an Ordinance to the Brewers and to the Bakers. In 1561 they were "forbidden to carry ale or bere within the city with iron-bound carts, upon payne of the forfeiture of their wheels."

Finally, in 1575, "the citie's pretented Corporation of Brewers" was abrogated by the University, on the plea that as well by the Charter of 21 Edward III., as by Act of Parliament 12 Edward IV., the Chancellor of the University had and ought to have wholly and solely the custody of the assize of bread, ale, and wine, together with the punishment and correction of all offenders, "and the fynes, yssues, and commodities thereuppon risinge." And further, that the Chancellor, by assent of the Convocation, had authoritie to make societies or corporations, "namlie, touching victellers and sundrie others, as appeared by y^e Charter of King Henrie y^e 8th." The new

book of Laws and Ordinances of the Brewers' Company was therefore ordered to be "brought and cancelled before the Chancellor, or his Commissarie, with^t delaie."

The Company therefore reverted to its earlier position, whatever that may have been.

Weavers and Fullers.—The Mystery of the Weavers and Fullers was incorporated by the Corporation of the City by order dated February 14, 1571-2, approved by the Judges of Assize ; but whether upon the lines of any former foundation does not seem clear. Most probably it was so.

They were to have a circuit of five miles allotted to them about the city and suburbs, "wthin which bounds no man must worke in y^e misterie of weavers and fullers unlesse he be of their fellowship."

They were to choose two wardens every year, the one a weaver the other a fuller, upon the feast of the "Exaltation of the Crosse," being the 14th day of September, "uppon which day they all goe to church together to heare some prayer or homilie red there to them, &c.; that beinge done, then they are to goe to y^e choice of their two wardens and four bedells or warners."

Those two wardens were to make search at times convenient after any kind of weavers or fullers' work not well and competently done, and to see that every weaver have in his house or shop "from the summe of 16 bores to the summe of 700 harneyses and slayes, 3 beares between every harnys ; and y^t every fuller have eleven corse of handells and 2 payre of sheres at y^e least, &c., under y^e payne of 2s. 6d., and no fuller within the sayd circuite may kepe or occupy in their houses journeymen, otherwise called cardes, upon payne of 6s.," &c.

They might keep their Courts upon the four usual quarter-days every year, fourteen to be sworne of y^e jury to inquire if the orders be well kept.

Mercers and Woollen Drapers.—In the records of the City, under date September 9, 1572, it was agreed that the mercers and woollen drapers should be incorporated in one incorporation ; and on the 12th day of the same month "Kewars (*sic*) of the Ordinances of the Mercers and Woollen Drapers" were appointed to "have the

comysion and be comythies of the boke of ordinances for the incorporacion of mercers and drapers, and to certifie this howse of theyer proceadings therein at the next Counsell."

On June 5, 1573, it is recorded "Hyt ys agreed at thys Counsell that the booke of the corporacion of mercers and wollen drapers shalbe engrossed and sealed, wth the proviso for the suffycient auctorytye of the Mayor for the tyme beinge to order and reforme all complaynts and contencyons, and that the Town Clarke for the tyme being be their steward, and have a reasonable ffee for the same."

No further details, except that in 1569 it had been agreed that the "occupacion of mersers and haberdashers shall have a corporacion, and also that the taylors and woollen drapers wthin y^{is} citey shall have a corporacion"—combinations of trades not finally adopted.



CHAPTER XLI.

GILDS OF SHROPSHIRE.

THE Gilds of this county have long been celebrated in history. They can only be referred to in brief here.

Ludlow.—This town possessed at a very early date—it is supposed as early as John, certainly in the reign of Henry III.—a very famous Gild: that of the *Palmers* (*Gilda palmariorum*). Tradition, indeed, carries the founding of this Gild to the reign of Edward the Confessor (twelfth century), and associates it with the "Legend of the Ring," an incident embodied in one of the painted windows in St. John's Chapel in the town, where King Edward is represented receiving the ring from the hands of two men dressed in Palmers' habit, who kneel to present it. This legend will be found set forth in detail in Sparrow's account of the Gild, reprinted from the "Transactions of the Shropshire Archæological Society," 1877. The Patent Rolls of Edward III. (fourteenth century) confirm the fact of an attempt being made to obtain Royal sanction for the Gild in the thirteenth century.

Leland, in the first half of the sixteenth century, writing (in his famous Survey) of the Parish Church, says :—

“ . . . This church hath beene much advanced by a Brotherhood therein founded in the name of St. John the Evangelist. The originall thereof was (as the people say there) in the tyme of K. Edward the Confessor, and it is constantly affirmed there that the Pilgrims that brought the Ringe from beyond the sea as a Token from St. John the Evangelist to K. Edward were the inhabitants of Ludlowe. This Fraternity hath a Guardian chosen yearly among the Burgesses, and to this Colledge belonge nowe a (*sic*) tenne Priests, partly found by Endowment of Landes, partly by Gatheringe the Devotion of people thereabout. And these Priests have a fayre house at the West End of the Paroch Church Yard : and by is an Hospitall or Almshouse of a 30 poore Folkes for the most part, and sometimes more, maintained partly by the Fraternity and partly by money given for Obits of men buried there in the Church.”

Thomas Churchyard, in his “Worthiness of Wales,” a Poem, published 1587, writing of Ludlow, said :—

“A goodly Guyld, the township did uphold,
By Edwards gift, a king of worthie fame.”

The Ordinances of the Gild were about this date, in substance, as follow :—

When it happens that any of the bretheren or sisteren of this Gild shall have been brought to such want, through theft, fire, shipwreck, fall of a house, or any other mishap, that they have not enough to live on, then once, twice, thrice, but not a fourth time, as much help shall be given to them, out of the goods of the Gild, as the Rector and Stewards, having regard to the deserts of each, and to the means of the Gild, shall order : so that whosoever bears the name of this Gild, shall be upraised again, through the ordinances, goods, and help of his bretheren.

If it befall that any brother or sister be cast into prison within the kingdom of England, or that a man or his goods be in any way unrightly seized (which God forbid), our Rector and Stewards shall, without delay, use every means in their power to get him and his goods freed. This they shall do at his own cost, if he can bear the charge :

but if he has not enough, the common fund of this Gild shall be taken in aid, so as to enable them faithfully and happily to do what ought to be done under this ordinance.

If any of our poorer bretheren or sisteren fall into grievous sickness, they shall be helped, both as to their bodily needs and other wants, out of the common fund of the Gild, until their health is renewed as it was before. But if any one becomes a leper, or blind, or maimed in limb, or smitten with any other incurable disorder (which God forbid), we wish that the goods of the Gild shall be largely bestowed on him.

If any good girl of the Gild, of marriageable age, cannot have the means found by her father, either to go into a religious house, or to marry, whichever she wishes to do, friendly and right help shall be given her out of our means, and our common chest towards enabling her to do whichever of the two she wishes.

Services of the dead shall be duly attended by all bretheren and sisteren.

If any man wishes, as is common, to keep night-watches with the dead, this will be allowed, on the condition that he neither calls up ghosts, nor makes any mockeries of the body or its good name, nor does any other scandal of the kind; lest by such scandals the discipline of the church may be brought into contempt, and the great judge may be provoked to heavier vengeance, who ought rather, by reason of the sins of the people, to be asked for love and mercy. And never shall any woman, unless of the household of the dead, keep such a night-watch.

Five of the seven men of the Gild shall every year choose a Rector and Stewards of the Gild, who shall manage its affairs.

The Common Seal of the Gild, was to be put to these Ordinances.

Wright, in his "*History of Ludlow*," &c., 1852, writing of this Gild, says: "One of its main objects, as stated in the early documents relating to it, was to provide by association and from a common fund for the protection of the members when robbed or oppressed by others; and it may, therefore, be supposed to have had its origin amid the personal insecurity occasioned by the continued troubles on the Welsh Border. . . . Richard II. is said to have augmented

this Gild; and its charters were confirmed by Henry VIII. The college consisted of a warden, seven priests, four singing men, two deacons, six choristers, to sing divine service in the church of St. Lawrence; and its revenues maintained also a schoolmaster for the Free Grammar School for thirty-two poor almspeople" (p 206).

Such are some of the changes which time makes in our early institutions.

Shrewsbury.—The Gilds of this ancient town are numerous and varied, and some of them possess detailed histories of considerable interest. As these have been dealt with by Mr. Henry Pidgeon in the *Reliquary* (vol. viii. p. 61, 1862—since reprinted); and by the Rev. W. A. Leighton in the "Transactions of the Shropshire Archæological and Natural History Society" more recently, it will not be necessary for us to do more than present a brief summary now.

A *Merchant* Gild was existing here at least as early as the eleventh year of King John (A.D. 1210), and in all probability it was founded in the Anglo-Saxon period. In the charter granted to the town by Henry III., in 1227, it is ordered that the burgesses and their heirs may have a Merchant Gild, and that no person who did not belong to that Gild should purchase merchandise in the borough without the consent of the burgesses.

The Company of *Drapers* was incorporated by Edward IV. (12 January, 1462), probably upon an older foundation. It came to hold considerable property.

The stipulations of the charter of this Company were:—

"That the said Company should, to the honour and laud of Almighty God, our Lady St. Mary, and St. Michael the Archangel, their patron, together with the holy company of heaven; sustain and find a Priest to do and say divine service daily, at the altar of St. Michael in the college church of St. Chad, and also give 13 poor men each of them one penny per week, to pray for the prosperity of our most dear Lord and Father Edward IV., our dearest mother the Queen, the King's Council, and for the fraternity of the said Guild, both quick and dead; and also to find a light made of wax, to be borne in the procession on Corpus Christi Day before the blessed Sacrament."

The Fraternity built or rebuilt Trinity Chapel on the south side of St. Mary's Church, and maintained a priest therein ; and founded almshouses for fourteen poor persons. Even after the Reformation this Gild evinced a regard for piety by providing an allowance to the Vicar of St. Alkmund's for reading prayer, in that church at six o'clock on Monday mornings, before the com-bretheren set out for Oswestry market ! *

The *Barber Chirurgeons'* Gild was incorporated by Edward I. in 1304, as its "composition" or statutes testify ; but it was united with the *Wax and Tallow Chandlers*, by James II., in 1686.

The Company of *Mercers and Goldsmiths* was incorporated by Edward IV., in 1480, but this must have been upon an earlier foundation, as records occur of an admission of freemen into the fraternity as early as 1425. It is possible that the two companies were united at this date. The Company of Mercers at one period sustained a priest in St. Chad's Church, to officiate daily at the altar of St. Michael, their patron saint ; and two shillings and twopence originally granted to pray for the King, Queen, and their Council, and for the fraternity of the said Gild, was afterwards granted to the occupants of the Almshouses.

The Royal Charter of the *Shoemakers* is dated at Westminster, November 12, 1387, and recites a charter of Edward III. A "composition," or new constitution, was obtained by the fraternity in 1561.

About 1486, the Abbot of Shrewsbury founded the Gild or Fraternity of *St. Wenefride*, in the parish Church of Holy Cross, within his monastery, which was confirmed by Royal charter under date February 9 in that year. This Gild, which was of the Religious Order, comprised the principal residents in the town and precincts. There is connected with this St. Wenefride one of those grand old monkish legends which seem now to have passed out of date. I will give it as briefly as it can be told :—

* It was ordered 25 Elizabeth (1583) that no Draper set out for Oswestry on Mondays before six o'clock, on forfeiture of 6s. 8d., and that they should wear their weapons all the way, and go in company. Not to go over Welsh Bridge before the bell toll six. In 1621 the Company agreed to buy no more cloth at Oswestry.

In the seventh century, there lived a virgin whose name was Wenefride. She was born of noble parents; her father's name was Thewith, a noble and potent lord in that part of Wales where Holywell stands; her mother's name was Wenlo, descended from a family in Montgomeryshire, and sister of St. Bueno. Bueno assumed the monastic habit and retired to Clynnog in Carnarvonshire, where he built a church and founded a convent; he afterwards visited his relations in Flintshire, and his brother-in-law giving him land, he built a church there, and took under his care his niece Wenefride, who, as she grew up, was so wrought upon by the moving discourses of her pious uncle, that she determined to preserve her virginity, and accordingly made a vow of chastity.

A neighbouring Prince, Cradocus, the son of King Allen, was so enamoured with the beauty of Wenefride, that espying an opportunity, when her parents were gone to church, he came to her, made known his passion, and earnestly pressed her to comply with his desires. The blushing virgin made an excuse to go into the next room, when she privately slipped out of the house and ran towards the church; the impatient Prince finding her gone, pursued, and on the descent of a hill, with a drawn sword, threatened to separate her head from her body if she did not consent to his will. The virgin still bravely refusing, he gave her a blow which at once separated her head from her body; the former falling upon the descent of a hill, rolled down to the church where the congregation were assembled, and at that time kneeling before the altar. Cradocus instantly received the reward of his crime, for he fell down dead, and the earth opening, swallowed up his corpse. Where Wenefride's head stopped, a spring immediately burst forth, famous in succeeding times for its many virtues, and miraculous cures wrought by it. St. Bueno taking up the head, carried it to the corpse, and offering up his devotions, nicely joined it to the body, which instantly reunited: the place was visible only by a slender white line encircling her neck, and she survived her decollation fifteen years. She died at Gwytherin in Denbighshire (a small village near the river Clwyd, which separates that county from Flintshire), where her bones rested till the time of the translation of them to the Abbey of Shrewsbury.

These incidents are drawn from the "Life of St. Wenefride;" need we make any other apology for giving them a place here?

The Company of *Shearmen* was an old foundation, and was also a very numerous body at one time. They were patrons of the Chantry of the Virgin Mary, in the Church of St. Julian. In 1479 it was included in the order then made for determining the rank and precedence of the several companies in the procession or "show," on Corpus Christi Day. Probably before this the Company of Butchers had been united with this Company. When, in 1583, the stone cross which stood in Old St. Chad's churchyard was taken down, there was found "a faire stone," on which was engraved a butcher's axe and knife, whence it was concluded that the Company of Butchers had paid for the building the same. The setting up of a "green tree," or Maypole, gaily decked with garlands, before the Shearman's Hall, was practised by the apprentices from early times. The noisy revelry connected therewith led to its suppression in Puritan times.

The *Vintners'* Company was established in 1412, in the 14th year of Edward IV.; the *Fishmongers'* Company, 1423; the *Weavers'*, 27 Henry VI., 1448—9 (this Company had a bye-law that certain fines should be applied to the "sustentacon and encreece of the lyght of the seyde crafte of Wevers, at the feast of Corpus Xpi. daye"); the *Fletchers, Coopers, and Bowyers*, 27 Henry VI., 1449, the *Carpenters and Tylers*, 28 Henry VI., 1449-50 (this Company was afterwards joined with the *Brickmakers, Bricklayers, and Plasterers*); the *Tailors and Skinners*, 39 Henry VI., 1460. The *Smiths, Armourers, &c.*, had a "composition" dated 19 James I., 1621, but were probably of much earlier original foundation. The *Tanners and Glovers* were existing in 1479, as were also the *Millers, Bakers, Cooks*, and others. There had also been Companies of *Saddlers, Painters, Glaziers, Curriers*, of which only more distant reference is now found.

The great festival of the Shrewsbury Gilds was on Corpus Christi Day, when there was a procession or "show," the most famous on record after those of Coventry and Preston. In the celebration of this anniversary, the various bodies proceeded to a stone cross—

probably that called the "Weeping Cross"—two miles south-east of the town, where "all joined in bewailing their sins, and in chanting forth petitions for a plentiful harvest." They then returned in the same order to the church of St. Chad, where to each was assigned a particular place in the choir. Three days of recreations succeeded in the following week.

The preparations made for this festival are indicated in the ordinances of the Mercers', the Ironmongers', and the Goldsmiths' Gilds, where they were to provide "300 mede of wax yearly, to be burnt in the procession of the Feast of Corpus Xpi."

Towards the close of the sixteenth century, there appears to have been a change in the character of the "show." "The Trades began to go to Kingsland" (anciently written Chingsland)—the usual day of the festival being retained. In order to accommodate the different combretheren, and to preserve quietude "within the walls," each Company had a small plot of land allotted to it by the Corporation. These varied in extent from nearly one-fourth to one-eighth of an acre, the space being enclosed with a hedge and planted with trees. The enclosures were termed "Arbours," and therein were erected buildings suited to the purposes of festivity. The interior fittings consisted of a central table extending the whole length, with benches on either side. At the upper end was a raised chair, with a canopy for the Mayor or presiding Warden, and at the lower, a partition enclosed as a buttery for the viands. In some cases quite solid buildings were erected.

The Shoemakers' Company had the largest space enclosed, and therein was included a "maze," generally known as the "Shoemakers' Race." It consisted of a labyrinth of walks containing in all a measured mile, within the diameter of a few yards, the object being to create confusion in the minds of the competitors as to the course to be taken in contests during the day's relaxation.

This feature of Convivial Arbours is a new one in the history of Gild festivals, and it was preserved down to recent times.

CHAPTER XLII.

GILDS OF SOMERSETSHIRE.

THERE is reason to believe that the Gilds of this county were alike numerous and important; but the records are not now to be obtained. It appears that they were not called upon to make returns under the Order of 1388—certainly those of the City of Bristol were not. If returns were made for the other towns they are not now available.

Bristol [anciently *Bristowe*].—This city of early mercantile renown—second only to London itself for some centuries—had some Gilds of a remarkable character. Of several of these I purpose to give a more or less detailed account.

Gild of the Kalendaries.—This was a society composed of religious and laity, females as well as males; and to it was committed the archives of the town, keeping a calendar or monthly register of all the public acts, registering deeds, rolls, &c.

This Gild was in existence earlier than A.D. 700, for in that year, according to William of Worcester—whose uncle (Thomas Botoner) was a member of it—the House of Kalendaries was erected in the parish of Christ Church. His words are “that it was founded in honour of the feast of Corpus Christi, long before the Norman conquest, about the year 700.”

1216, Nov. 11. Cardinal Guallo (or Guala Bicherius), legate of Pope Honorius in England, held a Council in the presence of the King, in which Louis, the French king’s son was excommunicated; and the Legate recognised the rights of the Kalendaries in the words “Propter antiquitates et bonitates in eâ Tilda repertas.”

1318. A Commission was sent from Walter, Bishop of Worcester, dated the 18th day of the Kalends of June, anno 1318, to warne all persons that had any charters, writings, or privilidges, or mynuments, concerning the liberties or privilidges of the Church of All Saints and fraternities of the Kalenders, to bring them in, and also to enquire the truth of the same, in respect that most of the charters, writings, and recordes were lost and embezeled away, by reason of fire that happened in the place or library that was in the said Church

of All Sainctes. To the execution of which Commission were called and cyted the Abbott and Covent of St. Augustine of Bristow, and divers burgisses in the name of the Mayor and Cominaltie of the same towne, and also all Rectors and Vickers of the same deanery, who appeared, some in person, and others by theire procurators. These certified the said Bishop that, in times past, the said fraternitie was called the *Gild or Brotherhood of the Cominaltie, Cleargy, and People of Bristow*; and that the place of the congregation of the brethren and sisters of the same was used in the Church of the Holy Trinitie of Bristow, in the time of Aylworde Meane and Bristericke his sonne, who were Lordes of Bristow before the last conquest of England—the beginning of which fraternitie did then exceed the memory of man; and did continue successively, after the Conquest, the place of meeting of the said fraternitie, during the time of William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and King Hen. I., and also of Robert Fitzhaymon, Consull of Gloucester and Lorde of Bristowe, and subsequently in the time of King Steeven, who took this towne by warre from Robert Earle of Gloucester, that was founder of the Priory of St. James. And after decease of the said Steeven, and reigne of King Hen. II., who was sonne of Maud the Empresse and daughter to King Hen. I., one Robert Fitzharding, a burgis of Bristow, by consent of the said Henry II. and Robert Earle of Gloucester, and others that were interessed therein, the said Gild or Brotherhood, from the said Church of Holy Trinitie unto the said Church of All Sainctes did translate and bring; and did found a school for Jewes and other strangers, to be brought up and instructed in Christianitie under the said fraternitie, and protection of the Mayor of Bristow and Monastery of St. Augustine in Bristoll for the time being; which house or schoole was then called the Checker Hall in Wine-street.

There is a note that the place wherein the said kalenders and library were burned, “is the roode loft or chamber next unto the streat, being on the north side of All Sainctes Church, over the pictured tombe of Queen Elizabeth.”

1333. The Abbot granted the fraternity permission to rebuild and enlarge their house towards Corn-street.

1340. July 10. An Inquisition was taken by Wulstan, Bishop of

Worcester, after which it was ordained that the bretheren of the Kalendaries, clergy and laity, were to meet on the first Monday in every month.

1434. Sir Thomas Marshall, a Kalendar, who built a house near All Saints' Church for the perpetual residence of the Vicars, died June 17.

1451. Sir John Gyllarde, prior of the Kalendaries, died. He had erected a curious wainscot-ceiling over the north aisle of All Saints' Church, and expended £217 upon the public library over the same aisle, under the government of the Priory and the Mayor.

1464. In a deed of ordinance made by the Bishop of Worcester mention is made of the Library of the Kalendaries recently erected, and of three inventories of the books—one to remain with the Dean, one with the Mayor, and the third with the Prior; and other regulations for the better security of the books. Evans ("Chronological History of Bristol," 1824) says the library was formed at the expense of the said bishop. That surely must be a mistake. He may have added to it. Or did he erect a building for it?

1466. This library was destroyed by fire "thro the carelessness of a drunken point-maker." (Evans, p. 109.)

There are various circumstances associated with this Gild which induce me to attribute to it a Roman origin.

In 1846 there was published in Bristol "The Calendars of All-Hallowen, Brystowe: An Attempt to Elucidate some Portions of the History of the Priory or Fraternitie of Calendars, whose Library once stood over the North, or Jesus Aisle of All Saints' Church, Bristol." By the Rev. Henry Rogers, M.A., vicar of that church. (Bristol, 8vo. pp. 279.)

Merchant Gild.—There was a free Merchant Gild in this city from a very early date, its members having the privilege to buy and sell in the said town freely and quietly from all toll and customs, with other liberties. The Gild was permitted to take a certain fine (or præstacionem) to its own use from all who were admitted into its liberties and society.

The Gild was confirmed in its liberties by John, Earl of Morton, afterwards (1199) King John, and by William, Earl of Gloucester.

1468. In the 7 Edward IV., William Canynges being Mayor, the following ordinances were made, according to custom, from time immemorial :—

(1) The Maior and Council fifteen days after Michaelmas were to call a council and to choose from them a person, that had been Maior or Sheriff, to be Master of the Fellowship of Merchants, and to choose two merchants for Wardens, and two Beedles to occupy as Beedles and Brokers to be attendant the said year upon the said Masters and Wardens, &c.

(2) The Master and fellowship to have at their will the chapel and the draught chamber at Spicer's Hall to assemble in, paying 20s. per ann.

(3) All merchants to attend (if in town) upon summons, or to pay one pound of wax to the Master and fellowship.

(4) All rules for selling to strangers of any of the four merchandises [not specified] to be kept on pain of 20s. for every default, one half to the fellowship, the other to the chamber.

(5) Nor upon pain aforesaid to sell to any stranger under the ruled price.

(6) If any merchant be in distress he must apply to the Wardens or Beedles, declaring the same, and if they provide not a remedy within three days, then the merchant burgess to sell any of his four merchandises at his pleasure.

These must be regarded as but a very brief outline of the regulations of this important body.

A Society of Merchant Venturers was incorporated by Edward VI. in 1552 ; its charters being afterwards confirmed by Elizabeth, and by Charles I., respectively. It became a rich and powerful body, and it seems not improbable that it inherited much of the influence of the Old Gild Merchant.

Mariners' Gild.—There was an early Gild under this designation. It was probably either revived or confirmed in its privileges in 24 Henry VI. (1445). It is then recited that for the soul's health and good of the King, the Mayor and commonalty, and for the prosperity of the mariners, who were exposed to manifold dangers and distresses, there should be a fraternity erected to the worship

of God, our Lady, St. Clement, St. George, and all the saints of heaven, to be founded in such place in Bristol as the Mayor should direct, for a priest and twelve poor mariners to pray daily as above ; to the support of which the master of every ship, barge, &c., after his voyage performed, on his arrival in the port, should pay 4d. per ton of goods imported, in two days, to two Wardens chosen from the craft of mariners, to be admitted by the Mayor, and all sworn by the articles and orders of the fraternity, on pain of 6s. 8d. if a master, if seaman, 3s. 4d., if servant, 1s. 8d.

(1) One half to the Mayor and the other to the fraternity towards the support of the priest and poor ; the like penalty to seamen or servants, who refuse or omit paying the 4d. per ton, and the Master to forfeit 40s. for the same default.

(2) Every master and mariner to attend at the procession of Corpus Christi Day, with the rest of his craft, upon the like penalties above.

(3) Any mariner convicted of having stolen goods on shipboard, or bringing such into his ship, the mate that receives such mariner shall forfeit 20s.

(4) Every master and mariner, in his harness, to attend the Mayor during the watches of St. John's Feast, St. Peter's and St. Paul's, on like penalties.

(5) None to be chosen into the number of the twelve poor men of the fraternity unless he has performed his duties for seven years, to be chosen by vote ; and if he has been a master seven years to receive 12d. per week, otherwise 8d. per week for his finding.

(6) A Warden omitting to pay the said allowance six weeks to any poor person, to forfeit 20s., half to the profit of the town, half to the fraternity.

(7) Every Bristol mariner arriving at any other port after the voyage made, though not in a ship of this port, to pay at his coming to the city the same as if he had sailed in a Bristol ship.

This Gild appears subsequently to have provided almshouses for its pensioners, adjoining which was a chapel dedicated to St. Clement.

Merchant Tailors.—This Gild is believed to have been founded

in 1392, under the designation of the "Fraternity of St. John the Baptist." The early Ordinances of the Gild speak of it as the "Fraternity of Tailors of Bristowe of the Gild of Saint John le Baptist." In the original oath of initiation of the brothers and sisters it is called the "Fraternity of St. John the Baptist," and is said to be instituted in the worship of God, and of our Lady Saint Marie, and of John the Baptist, and of All Hallows, or All Saints; while in the Oath of the Masters and Wardens it is called the "Craft of St. John the Baptist and the Craft of Tailors." At successive later dates it has had various modified designations.

The Gild thus seems to have had its origin as a religious fraternity; but, after the manner of the middle ages, it speedily blended business objects with its religious observances. It is recited in the Ordinances that before the institution of the Gild "the craft of Taillours in this honourable town had been and was still greatly slandered in many parts of the realm, insomuch that any Rabald or other person of the said craft not skilled in the art of clothing, or not belonging to the business, or one who steals the cloth entrusted to him, to the great slander of the town and craft, and to the great damage of the people in default that good ordinance is not made in this town, as in London, York, or other towns of the realm; in w^h cities and towns it is ordained and established that no man of the craft of Tailors shall be received into the franchise or freedom of this craft to cut any cloth, unless he be first presented by the Master and Wardens of the craft to the Mayor of this town, as an able and skilful person in his craft." Then follows the Ordinance:—

Therefore it is ordained and established by the Mayor and all the Common Council of the said town of Bristowe that from henceforth no man of the craft of Tailors shall be enfranchised in the aforesaid town, unless the Master and the four Wardens of the said Craft of Saint John the Baptist in Bristowe, for the time, shall witness to the Mayor, the Sheriff, and all the Court that he is a person able, of good condition, and of good name, and full perfect in his craft. The w^h person so presented and enabled by the advice of the Mayor and Bailif for the time being shall be received, paying his fine and fees. And that no such person so enfranchised hold his

craft but in open place and not in chambers, nor in corners. And that no servant of the craft shall hold a 'prentice nor servant under him unto the time that he be enfranchised, and if any so do that, any master of the craft having knowledge thereof shall warn the Mayor ; and the same man by the advise of the Master and Wardens may deliver the 'prentice or servant to a master of the craft to be taught unto the time that his first master be enfranchised within the town.

Amongst the other Ordinances of this Gild were the following :—

Also if any brother or sister of this fraternity lie "sick in God's bonds," as soon as his case becomes known to the Wardens, they in the name of all the fraternity shall visit him and help him, if needful, till he be cured of his sickness, or God shall take him.

Also if it so befalleth that any brother or sister of this fraternity die out of the country beyond or on this side the sea, as soon as it is known among the fraternity, service of Placebo and Dirige is to be done in the chapel of the fraternity in presence of all the bretheren and system, and masse on the morrow, as though that he died in town, and were buried in town.

Also that every brother and sister, where any brother or sister is dead, pay truly his masse penny to the Wardens when they come thereafter, and that the Wardens pay truly this mass penny to the priests that be at the service of the mass of the bretheren.

Also if any tailor of the said craft lose (or spoil) by his evil working cloth or garment to him delivered to be cut ; if the possessor and deliverer of the said cloth will thereof complain to the Master and Wardens, and certify by his oath how much the cloth cost him, the costs, if it be found that the said garment may not conveniently serve the possessor and deliverer, shall be fully given and paid, and the garment shall remain with the tailor as his own goods, and so every tailor shall be better advised to cut well and sufficiently the cloth that is unto him delivered to be cut.

Those who desire further details regarding this at one time important Gild may with advantage consult : "Some Account of the Ancient Fraternity of Merchant Taylors of Bristol ; with Transcripts of Ordinances and other Documents." By Francis F. Fox, late

Master of the Merchant Venturers, and one of the Trustees of the Merchant Taylors, 1880, of which, however, but fifty copies were printed for private circulation.

Bristol being at an early date a prominent mart for woollen cloth, this Gild probably assumed a considerable degree of importance in connection with the trade of the town.

Gild of the Fullers.—This was a Craft Gild, and the only outline of its objects which we have before us is a re-enactment of its Ordinances in 1406, which, however, recite its earlier existence, and state its objects as follows—this being in the form of a petition to the Corporation of the City :—

Whereas the craft as of old time had divers Ordinances enrolled before you of record in the Gihald [Gildhall] of Bristol, in order to put out and do away with all kinds of bad work and deceits which divers people, not knowing the craft, from time to time do, as well in fulling cloths as in “pleityng” and “rekkyng,” and many other defects in the said cloths; by which defects the town and craft are fallen into bad repute in many places where the said cloths are put to sale, to the great reproach and hindrance of the said craft. Wherefore, may it please your very wise discretions and honourable wisdom, to grant the said suppliants that all their good Ordinances of old time entered of record, and not repealed, be firmly held and kept and duly put in execution: and that four good men of the said craft be chosen by them every year, and sworn before the Mayor loyally to present all manner of defects which hereafter shall be found touching the said craft, with power, twice a week, to oversee such defects, and likewise to keep watch over the servants and workmen of the same craft, within the franchise of Bristol, so that the said servants and workmen should not take more wages than of old time is accustomed and ordained. And besides, discreet sirs, may it please you to grant to the said suppliants the new additions and points below written, to the profit and amendment of the said craft, and to the honour of the said town.

The new Ordinances made were accordingly: (1) four searchers shall be chosen; (2) wages shall be regulated; (3) cloths fulled outside the town shall not be touched up by Bristol fullers; (4) penalty

on the searchers if they fail in their duties. With power to make further Ordinances. "Given in the Gihald of Bristol, on the Monday next after the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the seventh year of the reign of King Henry, the fourth since the Conquest."

Gild of the Ringers.—The date of this Gild I cannot determine ; but of its objects there is a sufficient account—

"It is agreed and determined, that everyone that is or shall be of the Company or Society of St. Stephen's Ringers, shall keep all Articles and Decrees that are or shall be specified in this Ordinary concerning the good government and peaceable society of the said Company ; and that none shall be of the said Society but those that shall be of honest, peaceable, and good conversation, and such that shall be at all time and times ready to defend whatsoever shall be alledged against the said Company, as well in regard of any challenge as of any other wrong or injury that shall be offered and done by any one, of what estate or condition soever he be ; so that we may not only stop the mouths of those that would or shall exasperate themselves against us, but also gain credit and reputation by our musical exercise ; that others of our rich neighbours, hearing these loud cymbals with their ears, may, by the sweet harmony thereof, be enlarged in their hearts to pull one string to make it more sweet. And for these and other like causes, We have procured this Ordinary, and do confine and oblige ourselves to these articles following :"

The articles were for choice of a Master and Wardens. Collection of quarterage of 1d. from each freeman of the Gild. New members to give a breakfast, or pay 3s. 4d. in money. Penalties on officers for not calling the Company together, and on members who did not attend ; also on those ringing out of place, and on blundering ringers. There must be no talk or noise while ringing : no interfering with each other or generally. New Master to pay 2s. towards a breakfast, the remainder of the company the balance. Each Warden shall give the Master a pint of wine. Everyone must kneel and pray before going into the belfry. Those not paying fines and dues to be expelled. A peal to be rung every year in memory of a good doer

to the Gild—many of whom are personally named, and days fixed in the Ordinance.

In the *Bristol Mirror* of December 7, 1822, there appeared an account of a meeting of this Gild, with the addition of what professed to be some of these Ordinances. But parts of the report bore internal evidence of being inaccurate. It is probable that the Gild is still existing in some modified form.

The following enumeration of trade Gilds which existed in this city in the first half of the fifteenth century, is obtained from an order of the Mayor and Common Council made in 1449, that the Mayor and Sheriff should dispense wine on St. John's night, and in St. Peter's night, at the halls of the crafts, in the proportion of from ten to two gallons. The Gilds appear to be arranged in the order of their then importance :—

Weavers,	Skinners,	Masons,
Tuckers,	Smiths,	Tylers,
Tailors,	Farriers,	Carpenters,
Cornesers,	Cutellers,	Hoopers,
Butchers,	Lockyers,	Wiredrawers,
Dyers,	Barbers,	Cardmakers,
Bakers,	Waxmakers,	Bowers,
Brewers,	Tanners,	Fletchers.
Shermen,	Whitawers,	

Here are twenty-six in all. I have followed the spelling of the record.

Taunton.—It is believed there were early Gilds in this important town, but records are not forthcoming. Dr. James Hurly Pring, M.D., in his paper "On the Origin of Gilds, with a Notice of the Ancient Guildhall of Taunton ; being the substance of a paper read at a meeting of the Somerset Archæological and Natural History Society, held at the Castle, Taunton, December 18, 1882," says :—

"It was not, however, until comparatively so late a date as A.D. 1467, that we have any specific notice of the erection of a Guildhall in Taunton. The terms employed in this notice, however, are such as seem also to convey that there must have been a previous building of this description in Taunton, which either from having fallen into decay, or from some other cause, had apparently for some time ceased to be used, or even, perhaps, to exist" (p. 13).

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE GILDS OF WARWICKSHIRE.

THE Gilds of this county were probably very numerous. A few will be reviewed under the titles of the several towns wherein they were found.

Aston Cantlow.—There was here antiently a certain Fraternity or Gild, consisting of the Parishioners only, being founded by them to the Honour of God and the Blessed Virgin, but it had no lawful establishment till 9 Ed. 4, at which time, upon the humble petition of the Inhabitants, license was granted to Sir Edw. Nevill, Knight, then Lord of the Mannour, that he should so settle and order the same, as that there might be a certain priest maintained there to celebrate Divine Service daily at the Altar of the Blessed Virgin, in the said Church, for the good estate of the said K. Edw. 4 and Eliz. his Consort, as also for the Brethren and Sisters of that Fraternitee, during this life, and for their souls after their departure hence, and the souls of all the faithfull deceased: which accordingly was affected, and lands disposed thereunto for that purpose, valued at vijl. ixs. ijd. *per an.* in 37 H. 8.

Birmingham.—The Gilds in this town are all of a special class.

Gild of the Holy Cross.—Many details are given by Mr. Toulmin Smith (English Gilds, 1876, pp. 239—250), respecting the authorisation and subsequent formation of this Gild, but a very full description is given in Dugdale, which we now quote.

The originall hereof grew thus: In 6 R. 2, Thomas de Sheldon, John Colshill, John Goldsmyth, and Will atte Slowe, having obtained license to grant lands of xx marks *per an.* value, lying in Bermyngham and Eggebaston, for the maintenance of two Priests, to celebrate Divine Service daily, to the Honour of God, our blessed Lady his Mother, the Holy Cross, S. Thomas the Martyr, and S. Katherine, in the Church of S. Martin here at Bermingham; within ten years after the Inhabitants of this town, by the name of the Bailiffs and Commualtie of Bermingham, procured a patent from the same King

to found a Gild or perpetuall Fraternitie, amongst themselves to the Honour of the Holy Cross, consisting not only of men and women of Bermingham but other adjacent places; and to constitute a Master with certain Wardens thereof: as also to erect a Chantry of Priests, to celebrate divine Service in the said Church, for the souls of the Founders and all the Fraternitie, for whose support and all other charges incumbent there were xviii messuages, iij tofts, six acres of land, and xls. rent lying in the above specified towns of Bermingham and Eggebaston then given thereto. The lands belonging to which Gild were in 37 H. 8 valued at xxxi*l*. iis. x*l*., out of which three Priests that sung Mass in the church here had cvis. viii*l*. a piece; an organist, lxxiis. iiii*l*., the Common Midwife, iis. per an., and the bell-man, vis. viij*l*., but other reprises for brevitie, I omit.

Which lands, at the Humble suit of the Inhabitants, in 5 E. 6, were assigned by the King unto Will. Symour, gentleman, Richard Smalbroke, then Bayliff of the Town, John Shilton, Richard Swifte, Will. Colemore the elder, Thomas Marshall, Henry Foxall, John Veysy, Will. Bogue, John Kinge, Thomas Cowper, John Wylles, Will. Payntore, John Elyat, Will. Archerig, Thomas Smith, Rob. Rastell, Will. Colemore the younger, Thomas Snodon, and Will. Mychell, Inhabitants of this place and to their successors, to be chosen in, upon the death or departure out of town of any of the before recited persons, for the support and maintenance of a Free Grammar School within Bermingham, to be called the Free Grammar School of K. Edw. the Sixt, for the education and instruction of Children in Grammar for ever, with one School-master and an Usher under him: And extending to the value of xx*l*. per an. were by the said Letters Pat. to continue unto the persons above specified and their successors, to be held of the said King, his heirs and successors, as of his Castle of Kenilworth, in free and common socage, paying xxs. yearly into the Court of Augmentation, at the Feast of S. Michael the Arch-Angell, for all demands and services whatsoever."

Gild of St. John the Baptist, of Deritend.—The old formal description of Birmingham was "The Borough of Birmingham and Deritend;" the hamlet of Deritend, though in a different and adjoining parish, being a very ancient, and by no means the least

important part of the borough and lordship. The Gild Ordinances are not given in detail.

Gild commonly called "Lenche's Trust," in Birmingham.—We refer to this special Gild, so named, for the purpose of reproducing the following instructive note from "English Gilds" (p. 251):—

No doubt the feoffees of William Lenche carefully avoided using the name of "Gild" after the legislative plunder which had befallen the bodies so called. But for this, the Trust would assuredly soon have been called a "Gild." There is in the British Museum, among the Harleian MSS., a curious instance of a body of feoffees formed, as far as can be made out from wills and ordinances, under circumstances very much like those of Lenche's Trust. But these feoffees having, unfortunately, been in too great a hurry to call themselves a "Gild," they fell, with the others, on the hapless day of the massacre of the Gilds and the plunder of their property. This case happened in Bury St. Edmund's.

The Trusts in Lenche's case were to receive rents, and apply the same—(1) To the repairs of ways and bridges; (2) or otherwise to help the needy poor; (3) or to other pious uses, at discretion.

Brailes.—*Gild in the Church of Brailes.*—Ric. Nevill, Earl of Warwick, founded here a Gild by the name of a Warden, Brethren, and Sisters, with two Priests, to celebrate Divine service every day and to pray for the souls of the said Founders: the renew whereof (37 Hen. 8) was certified to be xxiii*l.* xiii*s.* ii*d.* out of which a Grammar School was then here maintained.

Coventry.—The Gilds of this town possess great interest.

The Gild-Merchant.—The return in this case begins by stating that the Merchants of Coventry found themselves much troubled about their merchandise being so far from the sea; and therefore got a Charter (letters patent) from Edw. III. (in 1340), for the foundation of a Gild-Merchant. This Charter, dated May 20, recites that an inquiry had been held, and it had been found that no harm would befall Coventry, or any one, if a Gild-Merchant were founded there, with bretheren and sisteren, and a Master, and the usual powers of a Gild, including that of making Ordinances. The Ordinances so made embrace the following objects:—

Chaplains shall be found, if the means of the Gild allow it, but such means shall not be so applied until the poor of the Gild have been provided for, and the other charges of the Gild have been paid. The Chaplains shall be chosen by the Master and the rest of the Gild, and shall fulfil duties as set forth in Ordinances, subject to removal for misbehaviour. If any one of the Gild is overtaken by mishap, the Gild shall advance him a free loan to trade with. In case of sickness or old age, the Gild shall maintain the sufferer. No one charged with crime shall be taken into the Gild; and any Gild-brother falling into crime shall be put out of the Gild. The Gild shall meet every year to keep the feast of the Assumption, and to deal with its affairs. Once every quarter the Gild shall meet and have prayers said. The name of the Gild shall not be taken in vain, to back up any wrong or quarrel. On the death of any one of the Gild, chaunts shall be sung for his soul, by name and surname. If any one of the Gild dies, and is buried outside the city, the same services shall be had and done as if he had died within the city. When anyone does not leave enough to pay for his burial, he shall be buried at the cost of the Gild. The foregoing Ordinances to last for ever. All the Gild shall swear to keep the Ordinances; and the Master to deal rightly with the goods of the Gild, and render an account before chosen auditors.

The property of the Gild was considerable, and throws light upon its objects, viz., tankards, and gold and silver; chalices, vestments, &c. A large annual rental from lands, houses, and rent-charges—out of this income 4 chaplains were kept. The Gild maintained 31 men and women at a heavy yearly charge. They also kept a lodging-house with 13 beds for poor travellers, with a governor, and woman to wash their feet, and all else that is needed. On the feast day the bretheren and sisteren were clad in livery, some at their own cost; others in hoods at the cost of the Gild. Their almsmen were clad in gowns and hoods by the Gild.

In 14 E. 3 . . . the King granted license to the Coventre-men that they should have a *Merchant-Gild*, and a Fraternity of Brethren and Sisters of the same in this town; with a Master or Warden thereof to be chosen out of the same Fraternity; and that they

might make Chantries, bestow Alms, do other works of Piety, and institute Ordinances touching the same, with all appertaining thereto.

Gild of Corpus Christi, founded prior to 1348—probably much earlier. Further Charter by Rich. II. in 1381.—A fresh Master, shall be chosen every year, who shall swear loyalty to the King and the City, and to the Gild. A chaplain ; and commemoration of the dead. “If any bretheren or sisteren of the Gild falls into poverty through fire, water, robbery, or any other worldly mishap, not being brought about through his own folly, the Master of the Gild and the bretheren and sisteren shall give help, according to the means of the Gild, until better times come.” A livery suit shall be worn ; and torches shall be carried in procession. A yearly meeting shall be held at the Palace of the Bishop of Chester, when accounts shall be rendered, and a new Master chosen.

The effects of the Gild for church services and for processions were alike numerous and valuable, for that period.

Gilds of the Holy Trinity.—Founded before 1364, probably a considerable period. There shall be two chaplains, and commemoration of the dead. Help shall be given to those who are old, or who have met with mishap. The sick shall be visited, and shall be helped. The poor shall be buried at the cost of the Gild. Lands were held under license of mortmain. Early mass shall be said so that men may hear it before going to work. The Gild maintains two poor brethren, and one sister.

This was afterwards called *Gild of the Holy Trinity, St. John Baptist and St. Katherine*, and is thus described by Dugdale:—

“H. Smyth, son to John, a Wealthy Citizen of Coventre, bore so great a love to that City, that he contributed to the purchase of £50 lands per annum, for the maintenance of one Priest, 12 poor men, and one woman in the above Gild.”

Gild of St. John Baptist.—In 17 E. 3, the King by Pat. dated 25 Maii, did give leave unto John Holland priest, John Lemman, Thomas Porter, Ric. de Stoke, Peter de Stoke, and Will. Welnesbrugh, that they should enter into a Fraternity, and make a Gild, consisting of themselves, and such others who were content to joyn with them to the honour of S. John Baptist. As also to purchase

certain lands, tenements and Rents, to the value of xx*l.* per annum, lying within the liberties of Coventre, for the founding of a Chantry of six Priests to sing Mass every day in the Churches of the Holy Trinity and S. Michael in Coventre aforesaid, for the soules of the King's Progenitors ; and for the good estate of the King ; Q. Isabel his mother, Q. Philipa his consort, and their children ; as also of Walter de Cheshunt, and Will. de Belgrave during their lives here on earth ; and for their soules after their departure hence, and for the good estate of the said John, John, Thomas, Rich., Peter, and Will., and the rest of the said Gild with their benefactors ; And likewise for their Souls, and for the Soul of John of Eltham, late E. of Cornwall, and of all the faithful deceased.

Henley.—We find but one Gild in this town, to which Dugdale refers as follows :—

In 26 H. 6 there was an Hospitall here built for the relief of Poor people and strangers . . . Some think that the Gild-House situate on the North Side of the chapel is the Hospitall, here spoken of ; For in the chapell before mentioned, there was a Gild founded by Ralph Boteler (Lord Sudley) which Gild had four Priests belonging thereto, who were to pray for the Founder's soul. But upon the Survey taken in 26 H. 8 there were no more than two priests serving therein, whereof one had an yearly stipend of vi*l.* vis. viij*l.* and the other of v*l.* Howbeit in 37 H. 8 upon the extent of the lands belonging thereto, which were then valued at xxvii*l.* iij*s.* iij*d.* it appears that there were three Priests, whereof one had a stipend of cxs. per annum, and the other two of cs. apiece, as also an organist, who had xls. annuity. Before the dissolution of this Gild it was the custome (as I have heard) that upon all publique occasions (as Weddings and the like) the Inhabitants of this town kept their feast in the Gild-house, before specified, in which they had most kind of household stuff, as Pewter, Brasse, Spits, Andirons, Linnen, Tables, &c., and Wood out of the little park at Beldesert, for Fewell ; those which were at the charge of the feast paying only vis. viij*l.* for the use of them. But now all is gone except the Pewter, which being in the Chapell-Warden's custody, they lend out for iv*l.* a dozen when any Feast is made.

Manceter.—This Gild was founded . . . at the instance of

John Riggeley then Abbot of Merevale, and did consist of divers men and women, Inhabitants of Atherston and this Parish of Manceter; who were every year upon Trinitie-Sunday, to choose amongst themselves, for the better rule and government of that Fraternitie, two masters, unto which Gild did belong one Priest to celebrate divine service at the Altar of the Blessed Virgin, in the Church at Manceter for the good estate of the said K. H. 6 and his Queen during this life, and for their Souls afterwards, as also for the good estate of all the Brethren and Sisters of the said Fraternitie, which Priest so serving there had in 26 H. 8 a stipend of vi*l.* per an. allowed unto him, but in 37 H. 8 all the lands belonging thereto were valued at x*l.* xs. out of which xx*s.* were yearly given to poor people.

Stratford-on-Avon.—The Gild of this town will naturally create much interest : the more so that, notwithstanding the number of writers who have examined the records of the place, it remained for Mr. Toulmin Smith to make the Ordinances of this Gild known in 1870, in his “English Gilds,” already so often quoted in this article.

Gild of the Holy Cross.—Founded at a very early period. The Ordinances quoted are those returned in January, 1389. The originall of this Fraternity I do not find recorded; neither have I seen any formal foundation thereof till 4 H. 4. Whence it is evident that such meetings were at first used by a mutuall agreement of friends and neighbours, and particular license granted to them for conferring lands or Rents to defray their publique charges (in respect that by the Statute of Mortmain such gifts would otherwise have been forfeited) as in this place may be discerned; for in 5 E. 3 several persons of this town had a leave to amortize divers particular petty rents thereunto, which they charged upon certain houses and lands situate within the compasse thereof: and in 7 Richard 2 one Richard Tille (an Inhabitant of this place) gave thereunto eight Mess. one toft, and half a yard of land, lying in Stratford, Clifford, and Shotriche without license; for which respect they were seized unto the King’s hands; but in such great request did it grow, within a short time after, that K. H. 4 by his letters Pat. dated at Westm. 8 June in the 4 year of his reign reciting that whereas Thomas Aldebury,

clerke Nich Sauser jun. and Thomas Compton, sen. stood enfeof of xx. Mess. 3 shops 4s. 4d. rent, half a yard land, and the moytie of 2 Burgages with th' appurtenance, lying within the town of Stratford super Avene, Bruggeston, and Ruznel-Clifford to the use of the Fraternity, which being antiently begun had continued till that time without the Royal License, and that divers lands and rents had been given thereto which K. E. 3 by his Letters Pat. dated 12 Nov. 5 E. 3 confirmed; the said King therefore taking into consideration the devout intention of the Founders and Continuers thereof, then gave license to the said Thom. Nich and Thom and to the rest of the Brethren and sisters of the same Gild, that they and their successors might not only continue the same, but if they should think fit make and begin a new Fraternity, of themselves and others, to the honour of the *Holy Crosse* and *St. John Baptist*. And that the Brethren and Sisters thereof, for the time being, might from year to year choose 8 Aldermen out of the said Fraternity, which said Aldermen and their successors should have power to elect a certain master and two Proctors of their Gild for to govern the lands and revenues thereto belonging.

And that the said Feoffees might assigne the said Messuages, Lands, and Rents, to the said Master and Proctors and their Successors for ever, to provide two or more Priests to celebrate Divine Service for the good estate of the said K. H. 4 Queen Joan his Consort, of Nich. de Bubbewith, the said King's Chaplain, and also of the Masters, Proctors, Aldermen, Brethren, and Sisters thereof, which then were or should after that time be; and for the good estate of all the Benefactors and maintainers thereof. And moreover, for the souls of the aid K. Henry, Joan his Consort, Nich. de Bubbewith, and of the Masters, Proctors, Brethren, and Sisters thereof after their departure out of this life: as also for the souls of the Father and Mother to the said King, of Constance his late Queen, and of all those Faithfull deceased: which Pat. was confirmed by King H. 6 at Westminster xv Junii 7 H. 6.

Gild of S. George.—Founded the same year as the Gild of the *Holy Trinity* by Rob. de Dynelay, Will. Russell, and Hugh Cooke of Warwick, by vertue of the said K.'s License bearing date 20 April,

whereby they had powers to receive others also of this Borough into their Fraternity, and to build and found a Chantry for two Priests to sing Masse every day in a Chapell over the Gate called Hongyn-Gate, in Warwick, for the good estate of the said King Richard and Queen Anne, his Consort, and of the said King's Mother, as also of Michael de la Poole, and all the Brethren and sisters of the said Gild, during their lives in this world, and for their Souls after their departure hence, as also for the souls of K. E. 3, Edw. P. of Wales, Father to K. Ric. 2, and other the K.'s Progenitors, and all the Faithfull departed; whereunto likewise Tho. Beauchamp, then E. of Warw. had license to give the Advowson of the Church of S. James, situate over the said Gate.

Gild of the Holy Trinity and the Biessed V^{ir}gin.—This Gild was founded in 6 R. 2 by Will. Hobkyns, John Cooke, Will. Lyndraper, Ric. Martin, Will. de la Chaumbre, Tho. Pavye, John Mountford, Tho. Raidy, John Hukyn, Ric. de Chestre, John Hering, Rob. Brown, and Rob. Walden, all Inhabitants of Warwick, for which they had the King's license bearing date 2 Maii the same year, the place of their association being the Church of our Lady, formerly mentioned. And within ten years after had the Brethren license to purchase vi Mess. iij tofts, xii cottages, viij shops, xxxviiij acres of Land and a half, iij acres and iij rods of Meadow ground, and 30s. Rent in Warwick, to find three Priests to sing Mass daily in the said Church of our Lady for the good estate of the said K. Ric. of his Q. and of his Mother, as also of T. Beauchamp, E. of Warwick, and Margaret his wife, Richard their son, and of Sr Will. Beauchamp, Kt., during their lives in this world, and for their Souls after their departure hence, and the Souls of E. 3 K. of England, Edw. P. of Wales, Father to the said K. Ric. 2, Thomas, sometime E. of Warwick, and Kath. his wife, and all the Faithful deceased.

In Dugdale's opinion these two Gilds were afterwards merged into one.

City of Worcester.—There were in this city at an early date several Gilds, of which, however, the details do not appear to have been preserved.

The Merchant-Gild.—In a charter of Henry III. granted this city

in A.D. 1227, it is expressly set forth "that they shall have a Gild-Merchant with a hanse and other liberties and customs pertaining to the Gild."

In the Ordinances of Worcester, bearing date 1467, but almost certainly only a revision of those of much earlier date, there are various references to Gilds, and sometimes to "the Gild," which may be assumed to be the *Gild-Merchant*. Thus art. 8 provides that "the Acts of the Gild be engrossed and put in a box, of which one of the Chamberlains is to have the key." In art. 22 it is ordered that the five Crafts' payments be more strictly kept. Under sec. 33, no craftsman may wear other livery than his own. Sec. 62 recites that whereas at some former Gild-days the commonalty have not known of the laws at those times made: hence, for the future, the articles made at each Gild-day shall be read twice at least before the Common Council of the City, and the day after before all the citizens. Art. 78 provides further that the Craft-Gilds of the City shall maintain their accustomed pageants, saving the common weal of the City. Strangers entering their respective crafts must pay the fees ordered by the Wardens—both masters and journeymen. Every pageant craft shall yearly provide a cresset to be borne before the Bailiff on St. John's Eve; and all the crafts shall be with the Bailiffs at the watch on that eve. Fees to be paid by new craftsmen.

In some city records bearing date 1671, it is stated that the citizens and inhabitants of Worcester "for the greatest part are vnited into Gilds, Fraternities, and Brotherhoods."

Gild of St. Nicholas.—All that we now find concerning this, are the Ordinances settled in 1692, upon the base of an earlier foundation; but it would present incongruities to introduce the details here.

Gild of the Joiners and Carpenters.—This Gild obtained new Ordinances also in 1692.

This is all the material we have with regard to the Gilds of Warwickshire.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE GILDS OF YORKSHIRE.

THE Gilds of this extensive county are of special interest.

Beverley.—From this ancient town the three following Gilds made returns :—

Gild of Corpus Christi.—This was probably the earliest of the Gilds of this town. Like that of the same name in York (to be afterwards spoken of) it was made up of both clergy and laity ; and it was to hold a yearly procession of pageants. The Ordinances begin by stating that the “solemnity and service” of Corpus Christi were begun, as a new thing, by command of Pope Urban IIIJ. (Pope A.D. 1261-4) and John XXIJ. (Pope 1316-34). The Ordinances are of a more common-sense character than those of the Gild of Corpus Christi in York. Help was to be given to the bretheren falling into want. In case of quarrel, the bretheren of the Gild to use their good offices to restore harmony.

Gild of St. Mary, founded 1355.—The affairs of the Gild were to be managed by an Alderman and two Stewards, as determined by the whole body. Payment on entry 5s. and a pound of wax, or more. Yearly meeting at fit place appointed away from the church ; “and there, one of the Gild shall be clad in comely fashion as a Queen, like to the glorious Virgin Mary, having what may seem a son in her arms ; and two others shall be clad like to Joseph and Simeon ; and two shall go as angels, carrying a candle-bearer, on which shall be twenty-four thick wax lights. With these and other great lights borne before them, and with much music and gladness, the pageant Virgin with her son, and Joseph and Simeon, shall go in procession to the church. And all the sisteren of the Gild shall follow the Virgin ; and afterwards all the bretheren ; and each of them shall carry a wax light weighing half a pound. And they shall go two and two, slowly pacing to the church ; and when they have got there, the pageant Virgin shall offer her son to Simeon at the high altar ; and all the sisteren and bretheren shall offer their wax lights, together with a penny each. All this having been solemnly done, they shall go home again with

gladness." Fines for non-attendance. Later in the day the bretheren and sisteren shall meet together and eat bread and cheese and drink ale, "rejoicing in the Lord, in praise of the glorious Virgin Mary." Officers to be then chosen; prayers and offerings for the dead. The Alderman and Stewards of the Gild to visit those bretheren and sisteren who were poor, ailing, or weak, and who have not enough of their own to live upon, and assist them out of the Gild-stock at the rate of 8s. 6d. or 4d. per week, to help their need. Cost of burial of poor bretheren, with becoming services, to be provided.

Gild of St. Elene, founded May 3, 1378.—At the end of each year a meeting of the Gild on the feast of St. Elene. "And then a fair youth, the fairest they can find, is picked out, and is clad as a Queen, like to St. Elene. And an old man goes before this youth, carrying a cross, and another old man carrying a shovel, in token of the finding of the Holy Cross. The sisteren of the Gild follow after, two and two; and then the bretheren, two and two; and then the two Stewards; and after all follows the Alderman. And so, all fairly clad, they go in procession, with much music, to the church of the Friars Minors of Beverley; and there, at the altar of St. Elene, solemn mass is celebrated, and every one of the Gild makes offering of a penny." Later in the day they meet in the Gildhall, and there eat bread and cheese, "and drink as much ale as is good for them"! They then choose an Alderman and two Stewards for the next year; and these are "bound to maintain two, three, or four bedridden poor folks; and when these die, they must bury them, and choose others in their place, and in like manner maintain them." Lights and services for the dead, and offerings. "Any money in hand at the end of the year is spent in repairing the chapel of the Gild, and in gifts to the poor." There was also in this town the *Great Gild of St. John of Beverley of the Hanshouse*: some details of this I find in "Hanseatic League."

"Thurston, by the grace of God Archbishop of York, to all the faithful in Christ, as well now as hereafter, greeting, and God's blessing, and his own. Be it known to you that I have given and granted, and with the advice of this Chapter of York and Beverley and of my Barons have by my Charter confirmed to the men of Beverley all

liberties, with the same laws that the men of York have in their city. Moreover, be it not unknown to you that the Lord Henry our King (Henry I.) has, with a good will, granted to us the power of making (this charter), and has by his own charter confirmed our statutes and our laws, after the manner of the laws of the Burgesses of York, saving what behoves to God and St. John, and myself and the Canons; that so he might uphold and enlarge the honour of the alms-deeds of his predecessors. With all these free customs I will that my Bourgeses of Beverley shall have their 'Hanshus;' which I give and grant to them in order that therein their common business may be done (*ut ibi sua statuta pertractent*), in honour of God and S. John and the Canons, and for this amendment of the whole town with the same freedom that the men of York have in their 'Hanshus.' I also grant to them toll for ever, xvij. marks a year; saving on the three feasts on which toll belongs to us and the Canons, namely, on the feast of St. John the Confessor in May, and the feast of the Translation of St. John, and the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

"On these three feasts I have made all the Burgesses of Beverley free and quit of every toll.

"This Charter also bears witness that I have granted to the same Burgesses the free right of coming in and going out, namely, within the town and beyond the town, in plain and wood and marsh, in ways and paths and other easements, save in meadows and cornfields, as good, free, and large as anyone can grant and confirm.

"And know ye that they shall be free and quit of any toll all through the whole shire of York, like as the men of York are. And I will that whosoever gainsays this shall be accursed, as the manner of cursing is in the Church of St. John, as shall be adjudged in the Church of St. John. These are witnesses: Geoffry Mirdoc, Nigel Ffosaard, Urnald Perci, Walter Spec, Eustace son of John, Thomas the Provost, Thurston the Archdeacon, Herbert the Canon, William the son of Tole, William of Bajus; before the household, both clergy and laity, of the Archbishop of York."

This charter was afterwards confirmed by the successor to Thurston.

Mr. William Smith, in his "Old Yorkshire," vol. iii., supplies the following information: "The Minstrels of Beverley formed a Guild,

dating from the time of King *Athelstane*. About the year 1513 the Church of St. Mary was undergoing a restoration, and the fraternity contributed a pillar, ornamented with the effigies of five minstrels, quaintly dressed in their livery, and inscribed on one side: 'Thys Pyllor made the Minstralls,' and on the other 'Orate pro Animabus Histrionum.' "

Hull.—RELIGIOUS GILDS.—There were several religious Gilds in this ancient borough (Kingston-upon-Hull) before the Reformation, but how many is uncertain. They were suppressed by virtue of an Act, which stated that their revenues should be applied to the augmentation of small vicarages, schools, &c., but they were only appropriated so in part. According to a MS. quoted by Tickell, the Commissioners that were empowered to carry out the provisions of the Act, were such rogues that they often made false returns, and where they found a rich Gild they made no return at all, but seized it immediately for their own use. The names of the suppressed Gilds in Hull which are recorded are—

St. Barbara's Gild, the hall of which stood in Salthouse-lane, with a large chapel adjoining it.

Gild of the Blessed Virgin Mary, founded 1357.—The founders were ten men and twelve women, nine of the latter being wives of the former. The payments (charged on the estates of the founders) were for each married couple, or for each single man and woman, 2s. 2d. per quarter; arrears might be distrained for. New members to pay the same. The affairs to be administered by an Alderman, Steward, and two help-men. Aid to be given to those in need, and able to work, to enable them to follow their callings. "If it happen that any of the Gild becomes infirm, bowed, blind, dumb, deaf, maimed, or sick, whether with some lasting or only temporary sickness, and whether in old age or in youth, or be so borne down by any other mishap that he has not the means of living, then, for kindness' sake, and for the souls' sake of the founders, it is ordained that each shall have, out of the goods of the Gild, at the hands of the Wardens, 7d. every week; and every one so being infirm, bowed, blind, dumb, deaf, maimed, or sick, shall have that sevenpence every week as long as he lives." If any of these so-afflicted members

could not pay their quarterages, these were to be defrayed out of the weekly allowances to be granted as last named. A pilgrim to the Holy Land was to be released from the quarterly payments while away. The Gild was to meet at stated times. Anyone misbehaving at any meeting, or attempting to defraud the Gild, to be punished; anyone guilty of felony to be expelled, as also anyone bringing discredit on the Gild. None so expelled to have any claim on the Gild. Quarrels among members to be settled by officers of the Gild, subject to appeal to whole body of members. No payment to be made on admission of second wife to Gild, the first having been a member. The Ordinances were to be read over to every new member, so that none could plead ignorance; and an oath taken.

Many modern friendly societies have less efficiently drawn rules than are embodied in the deed of constitution of this model Gild of the Middle Ages.

The Gild of Corpus Christi, founded in 1358, possessed a very handsome, spacious building in Monk Gate, and had ten tenements belonging to it. This Gild was to consist of men and women, who were to pay 10s. each year (by half-yearly payments), and afterwards five farthings a week. Members in arrears to be expelled, the affairs to be administered by Alderman and Chamberlain, with eight discreet men to help them. Help to be given to enable bretheren to follow their callings; also help to the afflicted at the rate of 1s. 2d. per week (the ailments enumerated being nearly the same as in the last-named Gild. Burials to be attended. Ordinances to be read over to new members. It seems that the original constitution of this Gild had been amended in several particulars, viz.—(1) That all the bretheren and sisteren were to meet annually, or pay a pound of wax. (2) That no money belonging to the Gild should ever be risked in trading beyond sea, unless by special grace, and then two sureties must be given. (3) Sons and daughters of bretheren of the Gild might be admitted without payment; all others coming in, to pay three pounds of silver, unless it be by special grace.

St. Clare Gild.—We find nothing recorded of this beyond the name, and no date is given.

Gild of St. John the Baptist.—The date of the foundation of this is also lost. The house belonging to this Fraternity stood near St. Mary's Church, and came into the hands of Henry Thurcross, Esq., who gave it to the Company of Merchant Tailors, and, on their making some alterations in it, they called it Merchant Tailors' Hall.

I find in "A Gossip about Guilds," by William Andrews, F.R.H.S., that he says, "There are some curious rules on record of the ancient Guild of *John the Baptist* at Hull. One was that 'if any man sole withouten wife, or woman withouten husband, after ye dede of oither dwel still in ye Gild, he shall pay 18d. and she 12d.' at four terms each year; thus putting a tax on widowhood. It maintained a priest at a salary of as 'mykill als we and he may accorde.' The officers were an Alderman, two Chamberlains, and 'eight discretist men of all ye Gyld,' and no member could refuse the office of Alderman without incurring a penalty of a noble, or of forty pence if declining the position of Chamberlain.

"'Brothers and Sisters' seem by these rules to be nearly equal, except as to office. If any member opposed officers, or 'gaynsayed' their ordinances, he was to be put out of the Guild, that he might not be as 'a rotten schepe to infect alle ye floke.'"

The remains of the building belonging to this Fraternity were removed during the year 1863.

Trade Gilds.—"There were anciently in Hull, as in most towns of importance, several guilds or companies of merchants embodied for the protection of their various trades. We find incidental notices of the 'Merchant Adventurers,' the 'Society of Merchants,' a guild of merchants called after the name of St. George, that was incorporated by the charter of Henry VIII. in 1524; the 'Fellowship of Merchants,' established by letters patent in 1577; and the 'Merchant Tailors,' whose hall (once the property of the religious Guild of St. John the Baptist) stood near the south-east corner of St. Mary's Churchyard. In the 'orders, grauntes, and privileges' of the Guild the latter are not described as 'Merchant' Taylors, but as the 'Guild or Fraternitie of Tailors.' The deed or 'composition,' in which these orders are set forth, is dated 1617, and was signed and sealed by 300 members. Hadley mentions the orders for the

regulation of their trade from the year 1590 to 1699. From the composition of 1617 (now in the possession of the Hull Corporation) it appears that the Guild was composed of sisters as well as brethren; and the members of the Guild (male members only, we presume) are described as 'burgesses.' . . .

"The Company of Coopers appears to have been the last of these trading companies which survived in Hull. The Guild had a hall in Hailes Entry, High-street, and over the doorway were the arms of the King and the Coopers; the motto, 'Fear God, honour the King, and love the Brethren,' was above the arms; below them were the words, 'Richard Hudson, Warden, 1714.' This Guild (as, indeed, did most of the Fraternities) made annual processions, exhibiting their plate, which was of considerable value."

Gild of Holy Trinity.—"On the 4th June, 1369, a Fraternity called the *Guild of the Holy Trinity* was founded by Robert Marshall, Alderman, William Scott, John de Wormly and his wife, Hugh de Hughtoft and his wife, and other persons to the number of thirty, who entered into an agreement to ordain, found, and appoint the aforesaid Guild to the honour of the Holy Trinity, and to the maintaining and perpetual supporting of the Fraternity; the members, of their own free and good will, bound themselves and their successors to pay two shillings in silver, at four times of the year, by several portions. The deed of agreement, which is still in existence, ordained and strictly enjoined that all brothers and sisters of the Guild be present in the church of the Holy Trinity (without a reasonable excuse), to carry the candle of the Guild, under the penalty of one pound of wax; and that when any of the brothers or sisters of the Guild should die, their funeral should be celebrated in the town of Hull, and all the brothers and sisters should be present at the dirge and mass; making offerings there for the soul of the deceased, under penalty for absence of one pound of wax; and that four tapers should be kept burning and thirty masses should be celebrated immediately after the burial, or at least within the first week. It also ordained, amongst other things, that 'if any brother or sister languished in a perpetual infirmity, so that they could not support themselves,' they should receive eightpence per week, and at the

feast of St. Martin a tunic and a little cap ; and in case the goods of the Guild should not be sufficient it was decreed that a collection should be made for the benefit of the infirm."

In 1662, Taylor, the "water poet," visited Hull, and in his quaint poem, "A Very Merry Wherry-Ferry Voyage, or Yorke for My Money," he speaks of this Gild and its purposes as follows :—

" Besides for euery sea or marine cause
They have a house of *Trinity*, whose lawes
And orders doe confirme, or else reforme
That which is right, or that which wrongs deform ;
It is a comely built, well ordered place,
But that which most of all the house doth grace
Are roomes for widowes, who are old and poore,
And haue bin wiues to mariners before.
They are for house roome, food, or lodging, or
For firing, Christianly provided for,
And as some dye, some doth their places win,
As one goes out another doth come in."

This Gild afterwards developed to extensive proportions under the title of the *Corporation of Trinity House*.

Pontefract.—There appear to be five different companies or Merchant Gilds in this town, traces of which have been found and recorded in "The Books of Entries of the Pontefract Corporation, 1653—1726," edited by Richard Holmes. He says: "They are (1) the dealers in flesh meat, *i.e.*, Butchers, (2) the dealers in woollen clothes, *i.e.*, the Shoemakers and Cordwainers ; (3) the makers and dealers in wooden ware, including not only what we understand by that term, casks, bowls, &c., but many other articles, for the provision of which we now look to the potter, as well as Bows and Pattens, each now obsolete, and (4) the ordinary shop-keeper, or dealer in miscellaneous articles of merchandise, either by tale or weight."

The constitutions of three of these are preserved, and are published in this interesting book.

The Butchers (1652).—They were to meet the Thursday next after Low Sunday, ten days after Easter ; and at least four other times in the year. They were to assemble in the Common Hall in the town called "Moot Hall," to elect two "substantiall and fitt p'sons to be

their Wardens and governo's." If any, after election, refused to take office, he was to forfeit vi^s. viii^d. to the Company, and "ten shillings to Mr. Major for the time being." On the Thursday next after Low Sunday a "Bedell" was to be chosen, who was to warn the Company of all assemblies and meetings. He also was to be fined if he refused to act. Fines were also imposed for non-attendance at meetings. No member was to take an apprentice for less than seven years. No apprentice was to set up in the town after his apprenticeship until he had provided a breakfast to the Company, and paid certain fees to the Wardens and Mayor. They were not to keep open their shops on Sunday, or frequent ale-houses during divine service. No alien or stranger was to be taken as apprentice, nor to be suffered to set up a shop in the town without the consent of the Mayor. That the meat was to be sold on the stalls and not taken from place to place. No corrupt flesh was to be sold without full consent of the purchaser. After due payment to the Company and Mayor, the eldest son, after the father's death, was to take the business.

The Wardens for the time being were to gather in and receive "all fines, penalties, paym'ts, and sums of money, by distresse, accon, suite, plaint, or otherwise, w'ch shall by reason of any pain, forfeiture, or penaltie in these constitucons or ordinances contened, be forfeited and due to be paid."

These appear to be the principal rules at the time of John Hill, the first Mayor of Pontefract, but Mr. Holmes says there were trade rules of the Butchers, or Fleshers, many years before 1484, and that the present Booths below the Castle were originally the Fleshers' booths; "stalls which Henry de Lacy's Charter permitted his tenants to erect on the then vacant triangular space east of Bitch Hill." Stalls were only allowed in two places in the town, and were erected under powers granted by the same charter. All the documents connected with this Gild appear to have perished.

1664.—The second set of constitutions preserved are those of the Wrights and other workers in wood, and is of equal antiquity with that of the Butchers.

They were to meet on the second Monday after Trinity Monday, and their rules appear much the same as the last, except that atten-

tion is called by Mr. Holmes to a provision "that the Wrights'" Company should bring out their "Pageant in Corpus Christi play, called Noah," which throws an interesting light upon the miracle plays as being established after the Commonwealth, and also that the substitution of modernised phrases for those of a more archaic character showed that a change was passing over the English language.

1700.—We next have the Mercers, or Merchant Grocers, who were to hold their meetings on Candlemas Day (February 2). These constitutions contain the names of the members of the Company, although they do not specify to which trade or occupation they respectively belonged. Besides these three, the constitutions of which are preserved, there were the Drapers and Tailors, and the Shoemakers and Cordwainers, the dealers in wool and leather, and the latter Mr. Holmes says perhaps include the Tanners, of which the Staths of Tanshelf were prominent members.

These companies became, it appears, most exclusive.

Richmond.—At Richmond there was a Fraternity or Gild dedicated to the praise of God and the honour of John the Baptist; its object was to sanctify the pursuits of industry by the offices of religion. The members formed chantries to celebrate masses for the souls of deceased benefactors, and to offer up prayers for the health of the souls and bodies of the living. They had certain privileges in the town, and, when travelling, were exempted from the payment of certain tolls. These funds supplied relief to poor brethren and distressed strangers, and occasionally to lepers, until they could be removed to the hospitals. The property of this Gild was seized by Henry VIII. in the thirty-eighth year of his reign. The chalices, copes, and ornaments of the altar were delivered over to the chamberlain of the borough. (From Spencer's "Guide to Richmond.")

Rotherham.—*Gild of the Holy Cross*, A.D. 1389.—From the translation we find in the "Historic Notices of Rotheram," by John Guest, this Gild appears to be of some considerable interest and long and ancient standing. The observances were a combination of social fellowship and religious fervour, but the translation being somewhat long we only briefly note the chief points of interest. It sets forth that in the thirtieth year of Edward III., after the Conquest certain

people of Rooderham in honour of God and the Holy Cross ordained this Fraternity.

The brethren and sisters assembled once a year in the church to collect sufficient money to find a chaplain to chant masses for a year, and perform other divine services every day before the cross in the church, and to provide torches and tapers of the value of 13s. 4d. to burn on feast days. On the Feast of Exaltation of the Holy Cross these were removed and carried in the procession.

When any of the Fraternity died, the body was carried by the survivors, with these torches burning round the body until it was buried, no other usages being observed.

Mr. Guest also gives an account of another document which introduces us to an office of which little is known, but which would seem to be an offshoot of the arrangements of the Gilds of that town, "The Greaves of our Lady's lights." These officers, it would seem, had charge of an image of our Lady, and of the candles burnt before it, in the Chapel on the Bridge, and also of sundry arms and armours stored for the defence of the town. But this we do not give *in extenso*, as not falling strictly within the scope of the Gild itself.

We find two other translations of documents relating to Gilds in this interesting book. First:—

"The Services or Guylde of our Lady, in the sayde Parishe Church of Rotherham.

"John Hill, incombent, of thage of lx yeres hath none other lyving than the proffitts of the sayd service.

"Goods, ornamentes, and plate belonging to the sayd service or guylde as particularly doth appere by the rental, vj^{li} xj^s viij^d. Coppiehold, nil. Whereof resolutes and deduccions by yere, x^s. And so remaineth clere to the Kinges Maiestie by yere, vj^{li} xx^d."

Secondly:—

"The Service or Guylde of Saynt Katheryne, in the seyd Parishe Church.

"Rychard Lyng, incombent, of thage of lvj yeres hath of the kinge's maiestie one annuall pencion of cvj^s viij^d ouer and besydes the proffittes of the seyd service.

"Goods, ornaments and plate belonging to the sayd service or

Guyld as apperith by inventorye : goods, vij^s v^d ob. ; plate, parcel gylte, xiiij ounces j quarter.

"The yerely value of the ffreehold belonging to the sayd service or Guyld as particularly doth appere by the rentall vj^{li} xvij^d. Coppiehold, nil.

"Resolutes and deduccions by yere ix^s ix^d. And so remayneth clere to the kinges majestie by yere, c.xj^s ix^d."

York.—The Gilds of this city we shall give in somewhat fuller detail than those of other places, as they present features distinct from any others in the kingdom at this date :—

Gild of the Lord's Prayer.—As to the beginning of this Gild, be it known that, once on a time, a play, setting forth the goodness of the Lord's Prayer, was played in this city ; in which play all manner of vices and sins were held up to scorn, and the virtues were held up to praise. This play met with so much favour that many said, "Would that this play could be kept up in this city, for the health of the souls and for the comfort of the citizens and neighbours." Hence, the keeping up of that play in times to come, for the health and amendment of the souls as well of the upholders as of the hearers of it, became the whole and sole cause of the beginning and fellowship of the bretheren of this brotherhood. And so the main charge of the Gild is to keep up this play, to the glory of God, the maker of the said prayer, and for the holding up of sins and vices to scorn. And because those who remain in their sins are unable to call God their father, therefore the bretheren of the Gild are, first of all, bound to shun company and businesses that are unworthy, and to keep themselves to good and worthy businesses. And they are bound to pray for the bretheren and sisteren of the Gild, both alive and dead, that the living shall be able so to keep the Gild that they may deserve to win God's fatherhood, and that the dead may have their torments lightened. Also, they are bound to come to the burial services of the dead bretheren and sisteren of the Gild. And if any one [member] does not leave enough to meet the cost of such services, the rest of the bretheren shall bear that cost. And if any brother dies, and is buried away from the city, the bretheren shall hold er vices for him within the City of York. It is then ordained that

the Gild will not help any man who rushes rashly into law or quarrel. "And because vain is the gathering of the faithful without some work of kindness is done, therefore the bretheren have made this Ordin.," which was that bretheren should be helped in the cases of robbery, fire, false imprisonment, or other mischance. One candle-bearer and seven lights, "in token of the seven supplications in the Lord's Prayer," were to be provided for feast days. A table was to be kept showing the use of the Lord's Prayer. Whenever the play was played, the Gild was to ride with it through the streets, clad in livery; and some were to keep order till the last. An annual feast was to be held, officers chosen, and accounts rendered. New members were to be pledged to a right life. The founders were too wise to pretend to foresee everything, so they ordained that the proposing of new Ordinances was not to be deemed treason. Divine service was to be held once a year specially, and ordinarily once every six weeks. The Gild had no lands, but only its play-properties, and a chest to keep them in.

There is a reference to this Gild of the Lord's Prayer in a hitherto unpublished tract of Wyclif, written, it is presumed, not later than 1378, ten years before the period with which we are dealing. He is arguing that the Scriptures ought to be translated into English. He notes that St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin; "also þe worpy reume of fraunse, not-wip-standinge alle lettingis, hap translatid þe bible, & þe gospels, with opere trewe sentensis of doctours, out of lateyn in-to freynsch." He asks, "Why shulden not engliȝsche men do so?" If English lords can get the Bible in French, why not in English? "And herfore freris han tauȝt in Englonde þe paternoster in engliȝsch tunge, as men seyen in the play of York, and in many opere cuntreys." In this connection, it may safely be assumed that the Gild of the Lord's Prayer exercised no small influence over the early Reformers of this country, and thus contributed in some degree to promote that institution, which eventually subverted so many of the Gilds themselves. We have here quoted from a volume of the Early English Text Society, Issue for 1879.

Gild of St. John Baptist.—The first charge of this Gild is to cherish brotherly love. And if any brother falls into want, so that

he cannot maintain himself, he shall have, for kindness' sake, sevenpence every week from the Gild. Service shall, once a year, be celebrated by a chaplain, for all the brethren, living and dead. No brother shall be so bold as to do wrong to anyone, thinking that the Gild will back him up. If he does, he shall be put out of the Gild for ever. Every brother binds himself that, if he is wroth with a brother, without reasonable cause, he shall pay, the first time a pound of wax ; the second time two pounds of wax ; and if he forgets himself yet a third time, he shall do what the Wardens of the Gild, with twelve brethren, shall ordain, or be put out of the Gild. The affairs of the Gild shall not be told to anyone unless for the good of the Gild. The Gild has no goods other than what are raised by yearly payments.

Gild of St. Thomas.—This was also at York, a religious Gild established in mediæval times, in honour of St. Thomas of Canterbury. The house of this Gild stands at the corner of Baggergate, and is still called by its original name of St. Thomas's Hospital. It is now an ordinary almshouse for the reception of twelve poor widows. At the beginning of the fifteenth century this Gild was united to the important Gild or Fraternity of Corpus Christi.

Gild of Corpus Christi.—The date of the origin of this Gild appears to have been 1408. There was to be a procession every year, and six priests were to be annually chosen for masters. New members were not to be required to take any oath, but they were required to have their consciences charged to make payments to the Gild. Services were to be held for the living and the dead. Laymen were to pay, and might pray, but they were to have no voice in the management of the Gild. Lights were to be borne at the festivals ; no children or servants were to be allowed membership. An account of the goods of the Gild was to be given by the old Masters to the new. This famous Gild had in a few years enrolled nearly 15,000 members. In the procession held in 1415 no less than 96 separate crafts joined ; and no less than fifty-four distinct pageants were prepared and presented in the procession by these crafts ; of these, eleven had their subjects taken from the Old Testament ; the remainder from the New. Ten crafts made

the show more glorious by bearing a vast number of blazing torches.

Gild of St. Christopher.—This also was a religious Gild, and to it was united the Gild of St. George. In the reign of King Henry VI. the Mayor and Commonalty, and the Masters, Brethren, and Sisters of the Fraternity or Gild of St. Christopher entered into an agreement to build, at their joint expense, a new hall, to be called the Guildhall of the City of York, they were to have liberty and power to occupy this on the festival of St. James the Apostle, and for five days before and four days after that feast, for the assembling of the Gild on those days in every year for ever. This important work took years to be completed. In the early part of the reign of Edward IV. it is recorded that the citizens assembled in the Guildhall, but the interior was not finished until later. There is fair reason to suppose that numerous other Fraternities existed in this city at this date.

With these particulars we close the history of the several Gilds so far as they relate to England; of those of Wales and Scotland we may perhaps have something to write on a future occasion.



CHAPTER XLV.

LITERATURE AND REVIVAL OF GILDS.

IN the previous chapters we have given a brief account of the various Gilds, religious and secular, and those combining the two elements, arranged under the various counties of England. The Gilds of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, if adequately treated, would form a separate volume. But a few general remarks on the literature and revival of Gilds may well be allowed here, in order to bring the subject to a conclusion.

The present century has witnessed a revival at all events of the literary and historical interest of Gilds, if the publication of works on that subject may be regarded as a test. Thus in 1821 Mr. Gavin Burns issued a pamphlet which shows how the friendly societies of Scotland have descended from the trade Gilds of other days; and in 1837, Mr. W. Herbert, librarian to the Corporation of London, published, in two large octavo volumes, "*The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London*"—it is needless to say their legitimate successors. Mr. H. C. Coote, F.S.A., in 1871, in his "*Ordinances of the Secular Gilds of London*," Mr. J. M. Ludlow, in 1872, in his "*Gilds and Friendly Societies*," Mr. J. Yeats, LL.D., in 1873, in his "*Gilds and their Functions*," read before the Society of Arts, and Mr. J. Holt, in his "*Societies for the Regulation of Trade in England and Germany*," read before the London and Middlesex Archæological Society, have drawn the public attention to an extent unknown before to their social principles and their general practice.

During the last few years also, Gilds have been very extensively revived, mostly by members of the Roman Catholic Church, and by those Protestant churches which look with the most favourable eye on the ancient faith. Of these associations there are now scores in existence, both in London and in our chief provincial towns; the

chief being the Gild of St. Chad, at Birmingham (1841), the Gild of St. Joseph, London (1842), the Gild of St. Joseph Friendly Society, Edinburgh; and, perhaps the most recent development, The Railway Gild of the Holy Cross. These Gilds all seek to promote mutual benevolence among their members, combined with devotion to a particular creed. We will conclude with a brief description of this last-named association:—The Railway Gild of the Holy Cross is an association among members of the railway service, who are also members of the Church of England, and who desire, by mutual conference and counsel, to help themselves and others to lead a Christian life.

For that purpose they hold frequent chapters or meetings, at which addresses are delivered, papers read, and discussion invited on any subject bearing upon a godly life in the world, and the means whereby it may be promoted among the members, and commended to others. Clerical associates are asked to join the Gild “for the sake of those spiritual services which the clergy only can render.” The Gild, though composed of Churchmen, is, according to the rules, by no means an aggressive or proselytising body. It would interfere with no man’s religious convictions, but it seeks to get hold of the irreligious and unconverted.

The Gild consists of a Provost and Vice-Provost, a Master, and Council (elected out of the brethren), and in 1877 had 44 brethren, 22 clerical associates, 12 lay associates, and six women associates—84 members in all. The brethren only have a vote in the management of the Gild affairs. In time the Gild proposes to throw out branches in all the principal towns, and establish in convenient centres clubs (open to working-men generally, but with special privileges to railway servants), and to organise services, lectures, instruction classes, and other machinery, “designed to promote the well-being of the community.” It may be mentioned that the rule of life for the brethren of the Railway Gild provides chiefly that they shall say private prayers every morning and evening, with a collect daily on behalf of the Gild, when possible; that they shall ask a blessing before, and say grace after meals; that they shall communicate at least three times a year, of which Easter is to be

one, and that they shall discountenance in every possible way, swearing, intemperance, impurity, dishonesty, and the use of profane language.

The rule for associates is less stringent, as they need not be communicants. There is neither entrance fee nor annual subscriptions required of the members.

The expenses of the Gild are met by offertories at Chapter meetings, and at occasional services of the Gild, when so allowed by the incumbent of any church.

In September, 1877, this Gild held its anniversary services in St. Paul's Cathedral, at St. Stephen's, Lewisham; St. Barnabas', Pimlico, and other Metropolitan churches. The celebration of the Holy Communion took place in the early morning, and there were prayers and services in the evening, and none but members and associates were admitted.

There seems but little doubt that in any revival of the old system of Gilds the religious element will assert itself more and more strongly, as in their secular aspects Gilds have been so largely superseded by the modern trades' union; but how far such a revival will extend, we must leave it to time to show, as this work deals with them only in the retrospect. (2)





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